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CRESSIDA.

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CHAPTER VI.

BETROTHED.

A LEADING feature in Harry Kennedy's life had been the strange knack he had always shown for acquiring nicknames. No sooner did he put in his appearance as a small boy at his first school than he had been dubbed 'the great Auk.' In those days he was an ungainly lad, with a figure all hasty development without proportion, a face that required to be accounted for, and painfully conscious of his inability to efface his unique and conspicuous person. Great Auk he remained until his promotion to Eton, where he was re-christened Spillikins. At college he was hardly known, even to the dons, except by the *sobriquet* of Ursa Major, which somebody had flung at him one day, and which stuck like a bur. Finally his co-mates at the iron-works, where he had studied for his profession, had nicknamed him Little John, soon cutting it down into Joe, a familiar appellation his family, his friends had caught up and he seemed likely to retain for life, almost forgetting that he ever had another.

It was all due to something self-asserting, original, idiosyncra-

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tical, about the outer man, that *would* stand forth, take out a patent for itself, as it were, and, like a new genus, had a right to a characteristic noun. There were Toms many, Dicks many, Harrys many; there was only one Joe.

Yet the object singled out for these distinctions was the most modest and unassuming of human beings. Joe conscientiously and habitually underrated himself. Not now from any distressing self-consciousness, or soaring, unsatisfied ambition, but simply and solely because he was without the habit of comparing himself with others, or in fact of thinking critically or otherwise about himself at all.

At thirty the great Auk—great Auk still at twenty-five as at ten years old—had developed into a most presentable and capable member of society, the maturity of excellent mental and physical qualities whose nature it is to be clumsy, unsightly, and inconvenient whilst in the growing stage. His shyness, though the root lay deep, no longer showed itself outwardly and unfavourably in his demeanour. It had been knocked out of him by the necessity he had been forced into of independent action, of acquiring and applying

knowledge of the world and men—the workaday world and men in shirt-sleeves, often with tarred hands and blackened faces, not Cressida's kingdom of flowers, delicate attentions, and evening dress. It was not for nothing that Joe had roughed it in various latitudes, and got acclimatised to risks and hardships. Perpetual and miscellaneous exertion had taught him habits of thought, and of quick and practical observation. He was anything but a genius, could boast no special gift, not even a highly cultured intellect; but he had a rarely well-trained and active intelligence, which showed itself in his countenance and manner, and, together with much quiet good sense and self-possession, gave him an almost exaggerated influence over the weak-minded and volatile among his juniors.

He was just home from Mexico and California on sick-leave. The sea-voyage had half cured him already, and the convalescent felt something of an impostor, and was hankering to go to work again. How vehemently he had longed for England whilst incapacitated by fever! But now his foot was on his native heath, or granite pavement rather, his Perversity felt decidedly outlandish and floored, and especially in the crack Bond-street hotel, where he had quartered himself whilst he transacted his London business and recruited his battered wardrobe.

The change from the back-woods to Mayfair in thirteen days was too complete and abrupt to be comfortable. Foremost in the wild country he had come from, in Piccadilly he felt at a disadvantage, and acknowledged the meanest dandy that lounged over the Hyde-Park railings as in some sort his superior. All were more up to the time of day, more self-suf-

ficient and *en rapport* with things about them, than he. Yet it was for these very qualities that he was counted conspicuous, and accustomed to be looked up to, in the Far West. He had no vanity to wound, and it was not a sense of slight, but simply the novel situation and altered relations with his fellow-creatures, that made him feel queer and isolated, till mentally he compared himself to a large sturgeon suddenly plumped down among the gold fish in a drawing-room aquarium.

One week in London had been quite enough for him, and he had half resolved to abridge his holiday, make short work of the business—or pleasure—of paying his respects to his relations, and apply for a temporary appointment of which he had heard the other day. He could not be pointlessly idle and enjoy himself, he discovered now. He had lost the habit, and the taste with it. There was nothing to draw him in one direction more than in another, and he pined a little, as the strongest man, without ties, can pine. Kennedy's parents were dead, his sisters married; he had no brothers, only a worthless cousin, whose vocation in life seemed to be to put Joe's good-nature to the test. He was very much alone in the world, and the fact is never so obnoxious to a man as when he is out on a holiday.

Why not marry, said common sense to him sometimes, if solitude does not suit you? There were whys. First, he would have had to ask his bride to accept with him, not only expatriation, but a great deal of roughing it in trying climates. Secondly, half the man clung hard to bachelor independence. For love he could have let it go; but—it might be prejudice, narrowness, or insensibility—it seemed to Joe as if he

could not care for the girls of the present day, though miscellaneous their types. Fast girls disgusted him, learned girls horrified him, 'unidead girls' bored him, fashionable girls overawed him, and homely girls satisfied him least of all. Mero barbarian and backwoodsman though he chose to consider himself, with all his rough hands, his heart was rather fastidious. This was the third why: that unconsciously he had come to try all girls by the Cressida standard. If he had never known her, it might have been different. One evening, on returning to his hotel, he found two letters in familiar hands awaiting him.

One was from his cousin Tom, the other Cressida's writing—doubtless an answer to a communication of his own a few days ago. Among a cartload of treasures and trifles from beyond the seas, which he had brought over for his kinsfolk and acquaintances, he had picked out the choicest and best to send to Cressida—queer many-coloured boxes in scented woods, carved ivory ornaments, woven grass mats, burnouses, fearfully and wonderfully embroidered in gold thread and silk.

He read his cousin's letter first, as we give the precedence to disagreeable things, in a hurry to get them over. Cressida's note should be the sugarplum after the physic. Tom's communications were always requests for money, and Joe hated of all things to have to refuse aid, as was sometimes unavoidable. Already he was running over the probable contents in his head. 'I am more ashamed than I can express to have once more to throw myself on your generosity,' &c.; 'a run of the most unheard-of ill luck,' &c.; 'a loan of fifty pounds will save me and mine from impending ruin,' &c.; 'most positively the last time

I shall appeal.' Much to his relief and surprise he found the prodigal writing to mention that a timely tenant had turned up for Monks' Orchard. A Mrs. de Sauvarez had taken it for the year. A beggarly rent was to be paid—a few hundreds—that the tenants might easily clear off the grapes in the greenhouse. But at all events the place would be lived in, kept dry and in order; whereas now everything was spoiling from rot and damp, and the difficulty was to let it at all. The petition—there was a petition of course, for nothing but urgent need would induce Tom to take up a pen—was that Joe would oblige him by running down to Monks' Orchard to settle a few necessary matters personally with the steward, and going over the place with him to investigate the dilapidations. Tom was prevented from going himself, having, he wrote, accidentally sprained his knee. 'Or more likely,' groaned Joe, 'the truth is that he hasn't the ready-money to pay his railway fare, although he does write on extra cream-laid, with a splendid stamped monogram.'

Tom's life was a chapter of accidents. His cousin had no patience left for him and his jeremiades and his white lies and his carefully-cultivated misfortunes. But Joe was soft-hearted, and had never refused his help when he could give it; and glad to-day that there was nothing that called for a 'No,' he put the note aside, and turned to the sugarplum—Cressida's inviting-looking little letter, a nice long one too.

He was all out in his calculations this evening. Here lay the reverse of a pleasant surprise for him.

He read it through—his countenance became more and more intent as he bent over the lines, returning again and again to those that told the news.

'Going to be married.' Well, it was not a catastrophe or a disaster of any sort. Why, then, must he go walking violently up and down the room? He did not feel tragic, or even 'cut up' by this piece of good news. Only the first sensation he experienced was much as if some one had just given him a violent slap in the face.

What a fool he was! To think he should have minded it so much, or minded it at all! He had admired her—O yes—and liked her too; but the very frankness of their friendship was due to the fact that, as if by tacit mutual consent, not an ounce of treacherous sentiment had been allowed to enter in; and as to the notion of a possible marriage between them, Joe from the outset had set it down as an absurdity, and had never entertained the idea except in the way that one sometimes entertains absurdities, as such.

As if, then, she were to remain single to save him a pang! Sooner or later the event was due. For all that, Joe will not soon forget that nasty biting sensation, that only mitigated by degrees, as he put down the letter, and submitted patiently to feel out the situation. Trains of emotion have their logical sequence, like trains of thought.

There was a mixture of pleasure. The exquisite wording of Cressida's letter fell like balm in one place that only made the wound caused in another by the import seem deeper, by reimpressing upon him what excellent friends they had been.

But so cordial a friendship as theirs, however sensible and open, belongs to those—they include most—which the marriage of either party must dissolve. It was natural that Joe should feel his pending loss. Had he ever seen

any chance of a preference for him on her part, or had his position been more promising, his retrospect now might have been of another sort. But Joe's disposition, which was nothing if not rational, had given the safest, soberest hue to his relations with her. He was not romantic or even imaginative, and had a very low idea of his own power of attraction for girls with subtle characters like Cressida, whilst acknowledging the deplorable fact that his taste rather inclined him to such than to plain, downright unsophisticated creatures like Millie or Jeanie Alleyne, for instance, either of whom would probably have been ready to follow him to New Guinea if he had asked her. It is your men of culture who, like Stephen Halliday, have fallen somewhat out of love with the daughters of culture; and who turn away from the complexities, the fine-drawn questionings, and searchings of heart of women whose characters are nothing more than the feminine counterpart of their own, the product of over-refinement of thought and of feeling,—these, with reason or without, they fear or distrust as unreal, and even prefer to wed reality in the form of a hoinde of low degree, to educate her afterwards, so far as they think desirable, and no farther. But Joe was not so advanced. It had never even occurred to him to simplify his ideal, which happened to be very far removed from a rough diamond.

The last man in the world to indulge in a hopeless passion. In his case it would not be pathetic, but only serve to make him ridiculous. It was his rule—a rule that sprang as much from his temperament as from principle—to shut the door on what promised only disappointment.

Not a bit of love on either side,

thanks to which this—and this alone—among Cressida's friendships of the sort, had run evenly and pleasantly from the beginning. She felt so thoroughly at ease, so particularly herself when with Joe, who neither exalted her into a sort of glorified Astarte, like Norbert, nor depreciated her as a passing fair, perhaps, but passing foolish, virgin, as did Stephen Halliday, whose judgment and principles seemed to cry shame on his heart for caring about her. Honest Joe understood her in some ways better than her lovers; he knew her faults, and liked her none the less for them.

He now tried to recall Norbert's personality. He remembered him, very vaguely, as a silent, reserved, delicate, nice-looking lad, whom he had rather disliked than otherwise, thinking he looked conceited and gave himself airs. It occurred to him now mournfully that this had probably been but incipient jealousy; and another strong impression that possessed him on reading Cressida's letter—the impulsive conviction that, in an evil moment, she had drifted into an engagement that did not augur well for her happiness—was, no doubt, nothing more: jealousy that Norbert should have succeeded where he, Joe, had never ventured to try. Then he remembered that young Alleyne was always talked of as a sort of musical genius, whilst poor Joe knew not Wagner from Mozart, Beethoven from Bach, and, privately, was persuaded that Cressida sang better than any professional artiste living.

‘The fellow must be three-and-twenty. I daresay he's turned out a nice sort of lad, and more of a ladies' man than some of us,’ said Joe, looking rather comically at his rough browned hands,—‘and he has an uncle who's made of

money,—good prospects, and a decent position to offer the girl he wants to marry. He's a lucky young dog, I know.’

That was his ultimatum. It left him very much depressed. He was booked to go with a party of friends to the theatre the same evening, after that to supper with them, and they needs must end up with Cremorne. Never had the dreariest lecture, the prosiest sermon, the heaviest duty-party, so bored and disgusted him as the mirth into which he submitted to be untimely dragged. How ugly and coarse the shows appeared, the staring paint and rouge, the ‘got-up’ faces of the women, so tawdry and vulgar, the jokes so stale, the tone so loud and jarring! The veriest Puritan could not have been more unaffectedly repelled than Joe—the reverse of a Puritan, and tolerant to the extreme, both in word and in deed. He recognised that he was in a murderous humour that night, and made great and fatiguing exertions not to let it appear. But if before this he had felt like a goat among sheep in the fold of London society and amusements, these would now, he foresaw, become more unpalatable than ever. He was glad of the definite object which his cousin's business afforded him for leaving town the next day. He meant to start at once for Monks' Orchard. It would also give him an opportunity of going to congratulate Cressida in person.

It was no use to try and keep his mind from harping on that one string, that one tune—Cressida. Mrs. Norbert Alleyne would be somebody else.

He dreamt to it, breakfasted to it, thought about it all the way to the station, and whilst waiting on the platform mused on still.

‘I should like to find out if she's happy. That, after all, is

what matters. Can that slack, helpless, moonstruck, lackadaisical youngster deserve her, I wonder? I hope she isn't marrying him out of charity or commiseration, or anything of that sort. It's a huge mistake; people find it out afterwards. But she is so impressionable, so considerate, so wax-hearted. Well, I only want to make sure it's all right and she's content with that miff—he *was* a miff; Ethelred the Unready they called him at school—and then the sooner the Raunch sees me back again the better for me, I expect. Hullo! By George, why, there he is!

Who, indeed, but Norbert should just come on to the platform!

'Napping, as usual,' thought Joe severely, as he watched him; 'head in air—brains all over the shop. He'll be striding over the edge of the platform if he doesn't mind.'

But Norbert, absent and dreamy though he was, shared the peculiar fortune of somnambulists, and had never been known to come to any grief in his fits of abstraction.

'Put that fellow in the Raunch,' thought Joe pityingly, 'he'd be no more good than a girl. If I halloo out at him and startle him, over on the line he'll go, to a dead certainty. "Alleyne, I say; Alleyne, how are you!"'

Norbert stared for a moment blankly, then remembered.

'So it's you, is it? I didn't know you were in England. Where are you off to?'

'Lulling. Your station too, I expect.'

'Yes. I'm off duty, and going to Greywell for Christmas.'

They travelled down together. Joe had three hours in which to form and pass judgment on Cressida's choice.

'Well, well, the fellow's wonderfully improved,' he acknowledged to himself frankly, when

they parted at Lulling and went off—Joe to the family estate; Norbert to look in at home, leave his luggage, and rush off to Fernswold instanter. Two years, Joe supposed, had done a lot for him. Forty-eight hours of happiness had done more—more towards metamorphosing the boy into the man—the chrysalis into the perfectimago. But how should Joe, in whom an exactly similar improvement had been brought about by exactly opposite causes, namely, by the difficulties and dangers that had beset his path, a *régime* of contest being needed to bring out his sterling qualities—how was he to jump to the conclusion that if Norbert's conversation was more fluent than heretofore, his bearing firmer, his expression brighter and clearer, the whole man more 'fit,' as Joe put it, this was due to a stroke of chance, not to the slow work of time?

But just as an exotic plant can expand only under such a high temperature or powerful sun as would stifle or scorch wild and hardier growths, so Norbert, under the influence of a kind of preternatural contentment, such as might enervate or paralyse many, first showed what he could be.

Up to now, all ways of pleasantness had seemed to him so distant, so illusive, as to lie beyond the limits of his cramped horizon. To dwell on them was pernicious, as it made present things more irksome than ever. His was one of those simple, definite natures with just one or two strong points of temperament. Not for them are the byways and cross-roads, the ramifications and subtleties of life. But give such a one leave and power to exist for his—hobbies call them, or ruling passions, or whatever best describes Nature's dictates, and he is the happiest of men. As a set-off to this, and

by virtue of the same quality, if things go against him, he becomes the most miserable.

Norbert's nature gave him two chances—for best or worst. A rare musical faculty and bias, and an almost equally rare faculty for an absorbing affection.

The free exercise of the first had been always denied him, tied and bound as he was by a chain of circumstances to his uncle's service. At the very moment when a possibility of breaking it, by means of a desperate move, is opened, chance number two drops into his hands—a gift so sweet, so welcome, so assured, that to grasp it, there is nothing he would not relinquish.

How it transforms and idealises the self-same future that had hung over him like a curse! What, a few months hence, will be so many hours of daily mechanical drudgery at a desk, to set against the spending of a single one with Cressida! The medium in which he was suffering a sort of gradual extinction, like a candle in vitiated air, becomes acceptable and healthful at last.

That evening was Norbert's. Poor Joe, lonely amid the dreariness of the home of his grandfathers, went round examining dilapidations with the steward, giving orders for repairs, and in the lowest possible spirits. His footstep echo after him in a melancholy manner as he paces through the dismantled rooms and down the long picture-gallery where an array of tall, proud, patrician-looking ancestral Kennedys gaze out of their dusty canvases on their forsaken premises and their degenerate, impoverished representative.

Cressida meanwhile had come across the fields to meet Norbert, who found her waiting for him like an Oread in the bit of upland

wood bordering the meadow. Then followed a golden hour or two for one at least of those who had met.

The house was all too small for Norbert and his happiness. The winter had not yet begun in earnest, and they lingered out of doors. The last autumn primroses flowered, the December birds sang songs for them. Norbert was beginning fully to take in his felicity, which at the first he had been too overwrought to do. Every word, look, and movement of Cressida's brought a fresh delight to him, coming with the added charm the feeling of appropriation gives.

Cressida, for her part, was grateful to him at least for not talking love in commonplaces. The billing and cooing of betrothed couples had always made her laugh. She had a dim idea that the feeling she had inspired in this particular quarter was of no ordinary sort; but was not sorry that it kept him tongue-tied on the subject, forbade ebullitions of sentiment, to which she could not have felt responsive. He was a dear good boy, she thought contentedly; and the smile with which she looked at the delicate ring he left on her finger when they parted that night was a sweet and happy one.

A week had elapsed since her engagement; and she was agreeably surprised to find she had not begun to repent it, as she had confidently expected to do. She repented so many things. Who, in these analytical days, puts his hand to the plough without looking back again and again? But look where she would, she saw no cause, no loop-hole for anything but self-complacency. Everybody was so delighted with her, so eager to say pleasant things. She wondered how she could have hesitated so long.

The next day brought a letter of congratulation which she had been expecting with singular impatience, but opened with a singular half-reluctance and dread. It was from Elise.

'So you have really and truly made up your mind to the leap in the dark. Nobody shall cry Hear, hear! and clap hands louder and more zealously than I. Yes, dear, you have my hearty approval, however little you may care for such an empty blessing.

'The wisdom of Elise de Sauvarez, *née* Carroll. The longer a maiden stands apart and looks at matrimony askance, studiously, the farther she recedes from it; for the more puzzling selection becomes. But girls are born into the world blind, like kittens; so these Heaven-made things we call marriages come off occasionally. Your eyes, for a kitten's, were remarkably wide open; you inclined to be critical; and I feared that you, seeing too well the worth of the gifts the gods provide, of this sort, might decline them. Now I hear you distinctly reviling me as a sceptic, a cynic, and worse. Of course we understand that for a limited period you are sworn in, a special constable of romance. Be as enthusiastic as you like, my little Revivalist, and for as long as you may; only don't take it amiss in your senior, in that, after such an experience as mine has been, I search my vocabulary diligently, but cannot find any expressions of high-flown congratulations that seem to me appropriate. You will get plenty of these, however, from your maiden aunts. Take one or two of a rather less sentimental tone from me.

'You are going to step at once into a capital social position, with freedom and power to enjoy yourself. People who set up for de-

spising money in these days are either hypocrites or simpletons. Nobody in his sane mind does so conscientiously, least of all can a woman—to whom it is of much more consequence than to a man—as her sphere is social; and nothing else, even in that sphere, so helps to put her on a par with man. (Here you exclaim against me as a horrid egotist, and fling down the letter in disgust. But you pick it up again presently, and proceed.) I ask you, is it my doing that I was born of an egotistical age, its legitimate daughter? You, Mouse, are another. I conjure you by the grand piano, which shall be my tribute of approbation to you on the occasion, to say if you could have found your earthly paradise in love and a crust? That was very well for our unsophisticated progenitors. Culture has improved away in us the appreciation for these rudiments of well-being. So far, so bad, it may be said; but culture has created in us new likings and tastes; and therefore we can live on for the gratification of these—if we can afford it.

'More last words, if you care to read them. Young unmarried people are apt to live and think as if the world was for them and their spring-time only. Mouse, methinks, has an inkling of the falseness of this. Her only real life may begin after she is married.'

Although this letter made Cressida feel decidedly uncomfortable, it engrossed her; and she found more to ponder over there than in Norbert's morning missive, previously read through. She was still at it when a visitor was announced:

'Mr. Kennedy.'

She was expecting him. He had sent a line to say that he was at Monks' Orchard, and hoped to call the same day.

Joe had lectured himself back into a kind of reconciliation with things as they are and must be, and met her with his old frank smile, and in the old frank tone of sterling friendship.

Never a trace of coquetry or *dilettante* grace in Cressida's manner to Joe Kennedy. They fell into a thoroughly natural, refreshing conversation. Joe talked—not at first about her engagement, but of himself; his experiences and adventures in the backwoods. Some of them were comic enough; or, at any rate, sounded humorous in the recital, and made her laugh heartily. All this recruited her spirits, which had been at a decidedly low ebb when he came in.

Then she recollected the presents, and thanked him for them. Joe confessed he had had his fears lest he might have been sending the traditional white elephant; he was always at his wits' end when he had to choose things for ladies. Cressida reassured him on that score.

It was curious, it was preposterous, how straightforward, how sincere, how good she always felt when talking to Joe. She had two selves, one of which kept close watch, though without control, over the other. That second flightier self of hers, in abeyance just now, thought oddly, how, if every man were like Joe, she would never flirt, or torment people, or lower herself in any way, but talk and behave on all occasions like a model maiden or wife, as the case might be.

No wonder that Joe persisted in liking her as she not only appeared but really was to him.

The time sped on pleasantly. Joe felt that his visit, from the point of view of etiquette, had lasted long enough.

'I mustn't go away forgetting

what I came on purpose for,' he observed presently, with significance.

'Ah, you came to congratulate me,' said Cressida, with a smile; 'every one who calls or writes to me now does it for that expressly. I begin to think there never was such an easy way of deserving congratulations and pleasing everybody. If I were a man, and had taken a double first-class, or won the Victoria Cross, the applause couldn't have been more spontaneous and universal.'

'Then perhaps you'd rather dispense with any more that may be still to come,' he said, laughing awkwardly, 'and let mine be understood.'

She laughed back problematically, and there was a pause.

'Were you surprised?' she asked.

'Yes—or no,' he said, feeling constrained and clumsy. 'One is surprised at nothing nowadays. I mean—I mean—' he stammered, as Cressida laughed heartily; and poor Joe became sensible that he was putting his foot in it at every step. He stopped, and then concluded, in an apologetic way that was not intentional, but which he could not help, 'You know I have not seen anything of Norbert Alleyne since he was a boy.'

'He is my age,' she replied; 'but if everybody thinks and talks of him as a boy still, it is because of a kind of youthfulness in him that I think he will never lose.'

It was true. Even Joe felt that in Norbert, and that it might be attractive.

'It was not because of any unworthiness on his part that I never, somehow, had thought of you and him in the same breath.'

'O, if you come to worth,' said Cressida playfully, 'it is he who deserves a much, much better somebody than myself.'

Here was the cue for Joe to give his congratulations, and he gave them accordingly. They were not of the common ring—the good wishes sentimental nor good wishes conventional—but just a few rough-spoken words, so heartfelt, generous, and straightforward that Cressida was touched.

'Do you really mind whether I am happy or not?' she asked wistfully.

'What a question from you to me! I mind particularly,' he replied, growing very red.

'I'm sorry,' she said frankly; 'because, do you know, I sometimes think I shall never be really happy—at least, never for long.'

'Why?'

'I haven't the knack,' she replied, laughing.

'But perhaps you have never had a fair trial till now,' said Joe, looking grave, though trying not to speak too seriously, as he rose to take leave.

Throughout this half hour he might flatter himself on having kept miles off the faintest emotional weakness. It was only now that it had come to saying good-bye,—for it was good-bye to that three years' steady friendship that had been, if not the greatest, at all events the choicest pleasure of his life,—and he took her hand and tried to think of her as a bride and a stranger for him, that a mist came over his eyes, a stone rose in his throat, and Joe perceived he was on the brink of making a fool of himself.

'At all events,' he said hastily, 'you must let your friends think of you as happy now.'

'Friends!' repeated Cressida, in a low voice, but with bitterness; 'it seems to be my fate to have—only lovers—no friends.'

Joe, with a mighty effort, had squashed the germ of interloping

feeling, and replied quietly—but there was something solemn in the simplicity of his avowal—

'One—whilst I live! If ever you want a friend to serve you, you know you have one in me.'

'I have—I have,' repeated Cressida to herself when he was gone. To him she had replied only by the gentlest pressure of hand and a glance of gratitude and trust. 'Thank Heaven, there are *some* good people still left above ground!'

One more incident was to mark that day. Late in the evening a parcel arrived for her. The last days had brought several, and she was already prospectively *blasée* on the subject of the miscellaneous gifts—from silver plate to photograph books—that they might be expected to contain; so she opened the case rather carelessly and mechanically. Inside was Mr. Marriott's present—a *parure* of diamonds, such as her soul had desired once upon a time.

She flushed a little as she took them out. Her father looked at them with a kind of awe, and ventured a few timid speculations on their worth. 'I shouldn't wonder if they cost him a thousand pounds or more, perhaps. Do you not think, dear, it would be safer to deposit them at the bank at Lulington?' There was something ludicrous in this seriousness, and she began to laugh. But when she was up-stairs and alone with her prize, for a while she could not take her eyes off the flashing, sparkling things. They riveted her with a cold fascination.

She will never envy young duchesses and operatic queens again, she thinks. Who would have thought the old financier would have had such very good taste?

She tried them on. Horribly becoming things they were, as she

knew—the right phosphorescence to set off that strange, delicate, transparent countenance of hers.

She laughed, observing that they made her feel wicked, and then put them away, wondering what the exact charm of such things might be, and whether it would wear off—finding matter for musing some time longer on the philosophy of diamonds.

‘There is not the slightest question about it,’ whispered Cressida to herself, as she laid her head on the pillow, kissed Norbert’s little ring and wished it good-night, ‘I—I like being engaged.’

CHAPTER VII.

TWIXT CUP AND LIP.

THERE was real sunshine in the house of Alleyne. The lesson how to prize and make the most of the smallest mercies was one that had long been learnt by the females in that establishment. The news of Norbert’s engagement came to them like a godsend; not merely as a pleasant stir and a bright ray breaking on the dulness and owls’ light of Greywell, but because it brought with it the definite solution of grave troubles and of anxieties reckoned incurable. Like the skilful *dénouement* of a five-act drama—where some undreamt-of turn or fortuitous accident rights matters just when they looked most hopeless, and tragedy hemmed us in on every side—it swept the sky clear as by miracle.

Colonel Alleyne would have been genial if he could; this he showed by his silence. He had so entirely lost the habit of opening his mouth except to say disagreeable things, that the Neapolitans might as reasonably expect Vesuvius to spout loaves and

fishes, as might his family to hear pleasant speeches fall from the Colonel’s lips. Quiescence, as with the volcano, was the utmost that could be expected of him when in his best humour; and never, within his children’s recollection, had he been so quiescent as now.

The reflection of Norbert’s beatitude told upon Millie and Jeanie. The new and delightful mine of conversation and conjecture opened to them was a treat in itself, and they busied themselves in interesting speculations. Where would Norbert and his wife live? How well Cressida would look as a bride! It was a model, nay an ideal, *matrimonio*. No money troubles, no family difficulties, no drawbacks on either side—nothing but tastes to gratify and the wherewithal so to do. Millie would picture them to herself with a certain awe in the London house they would have, leading a brilliant sort of life, that dazzled her like an Arabian Night’s Entertainment. Jeanie watched them with another very different feeling uppermost. She was not jealous. Such love and happiness were too entirely beyond her own horizon. ‘Where no comparison, there is no envy.’ Flower-girls do not envy queens, nor peasants premiers, nor playwrights Shakespeare. Nor Jeanie happy lovers. But a mere fraction of the affection she saw lavished on Cressida would, for herself, have contained the raw material for a life’s happiness, and she would have asked nothing better than to repay it with a life’s devotion. So what seemed to her first and foremost in the story of their lot was their mutual attachment.

As for Mrs. Alleyne, her poor, troubled face was lit up as it had never been for years. Norbert and his father at one at last;

Norbert contented, and secured from the smash ordead-lock which those irreconcilables—his poet's temperament and his man-of-business position—threatened to bring him to. No wonder her joy and gratitude knew no bounds. She could have knelt to Cressida for bringing this about, and saving that boy—her best beloved.

See Cressida, therefore, in the novel, unsolicited character of ministering angel and benefactress in general to the family of Alleyne. The honour was something of an incubus ; at times she felt embarrassed and more than half an impostor. So much gratitude, she feared, she had not deserved. She was angry with herself for wearying of poor Mrs. Alleyne's motherly rigmaroles and the sisterly *épanchements* of Millie and Jeanie ; but weary of them she did, and that soon. On the other hand, she was deeply glad of Norbert's happiness, and the consciousness of being somehow of great good to several people was soothing and pleasant in its way.

There was just one soul in the Greywell establishment upon whom the news had told very differently.

When Norbert, after that memorable hour over Mr. Marriott's aquarium, had broken or rather blurted out the facts to Fan, on returning to his lodgings, she thought he must be crazy or joking. She would not believe it.

Norbert was naturally a little hurt. When Fan, aghast, saw it was earnest, she found there was no sort of safety except in holding her tongue. For her heart and head were in a terrible tumult.

That Norbert should renounce a vocation so passionately cherished—a vocation to which every ordinance of Nature seemed to have called him, and which hither-

to no opposition could force out of his thoughts—renounce it cheerfully, too, and willingly devote himself for the remainder of his life to money-grubbing (singularly indifferent to money's worth though he was), perhaps to acquiring a taste for it—all this to the ardent girl seemed at first sight an outrage to all reason : as it were, giving the lie to the whole of his life until now.

But the wisdom in her—and, for sixteen, she was not deficient in that commodity—kept repeating that it was exactly what might have been expected. 'All for love, and the world (even art and its sweets and its laurels) well lost,' is a maxim upon which the artist-born will act for evermore, even when the rest of the world have given it up.

She recognised now that Norbert must have had and hidden this passion in his heart for a long while. She could also surmise its present power over him. Weak, timid, quiet, seemingly shiftless natures are always those to astonish us by the depth and tenacity of their attachments. So Cressida to Norbert is all in all, and she, Fan, nothing particular.

It is an old stale story that sisters are unreasonable and unsympathetic over their brothers' love-affairs, which, seen through the spectacles of petty jealousy, appear to them as a mutual amiable delusion. Fan theoretically despised them for it ; yet now she was put to the test, a rebellious voice arose within her, forbidding the banns. Was it jealousy ? She had double cause. First, Norbert's want of confidence in the past, and present oblivion of higher aims ; and secondly, the loss to herself of Cressida's heart, which must be all gone, or going, to her lover. So bursts another bubble : that brief romantic friendship

which had arisen between the two girls. '*La destinée n'ouvre point une porte sans en fermer une autre.*'

However, there was the fact. Fan decided that she was an old stupid, and as blind as a mole into the bargain. Then, with that loyalty to her more generous impulses which was the keynote of her character, she took her cue, telling her to efface herself, and patiently to play the 'walking lady' where before she had taken the lead. Only she secretly swore to herself that she would never fall in love —*never!* People were so ridiculous!

It was in March. Cressida had come down from the rectory to stay a few days at Greywell, previous to Norbert's departure. His brief holiday was over, and he was starting immediately for Axbury, where he was to hold a temporary post of honour for some months as deputy-manager to the local branch of his uncle's bank. The appointment, besides taking him a hundred and fifty miles off, would throw upon him an amount of responsibility that must keep him tied, barely giving him time to rush up now and then for a few hours, on a flying visit to Lulington and Cressida. This, then, would be their last meeting with freedom to lengthen out the hours of leisure—their last until he left Axbury in July, by which time all their arrangements would have been made, and the wedding would follow very shortly upon his return.

Cressida was looking prettier than ever. She had made up her mind to be very happy, and for the last six weeks had succeeded without an effort; they had been composed of a series of pleasant little surprises and rising interests, not yet full grown into irksome cares and duties.

She enjoyed, of all things, map-

ping out her future with Norbert. It amused her to talk over their house and household arrangements. What an inimitable model of taste she will set to her superiors! They laughed as they thought of how the Marriots would not fail to try and appropriate their happy thoughts in furnishing and decorating, and reproduce them in caricature.

They discussed all their prospective *ménage*, down to the minutest details, and their talk was apt to run chiefly on such practical prosaic matters. Even as an accepted lover, Norbert remained the least demonstrative of men. It was really not astonishing that Fan should have never divined what lay at the bottom of his heart. The nonchalance of his manner—an effect of shyness and reserve—easily led people to think of him as self-absorbed. It had needed Cressida's *finesse* to perceive how the land lay; and even now the moments were rare when he let his feeling flash out. But vividly conscious as she had been of it all along, she could not to herself feign ignorance of how it possessed him now. It might flatter, but it oppressed her at times, and then she would try to shut her eyes to it. It was the only part about her engagement she did not like—this heartfelt, ideal, unalloyed adoration. It made things seem serious, and dragged her into a depth of reality she wished to skim merely. Moments came when she was haunted by an uneasy sense of her inability to go on meeting it sympathetically, or a sense of acting, of art (this never failed her), as needful to make her say the right thing. It was something more than the old story of love on the one side, and let love on the other. The word had an utterly different significance for him and for herself. He did not know it,

but she did ; and she felt most ashamed when she found herself playing up best to his transcendental state of mind. Well, men carry dilettantism into their politics, their religion, their philosophy, their morality ; what wonder if women carry it into their love ?

The Alleynes made almost a religious duty of leaving Norbert and Cressida *tête-à-tête*. The girls stood in old-fashioned awe of the presence of betrothed lovers, and the schoolroom, by tacit consent, was treated as an adytum into which no third person would venture to penetrate. As to Fan, she would as soon have put her unsanctified head into a lion's den as over that threshold during Norbert's last afternoon, which it was supposed he and Cressida would naturally desire to spin out to the utmost.

Norbert had brought down his friend Lewis Lefroy with him from London. As a rule he seldom ventured on such a step, deeming that ' May you stay at Greywell ! ' would be a goodly imprecation to hurl at his enemies, and not wishing to expose his friends' good-will to so severe a test as his father's incivility. Norbert's chums were *suspects*, and snubbed accordingly. But now he was for once in high favour, he trusted that some rays of it might reflect on Mr. Lefroy, artist though he chanced to be. Besides, Norbert was not without an after-thought in the matter. Lewis Lefroy was a popular fellow, who took to society of almost any kind. He would amuse the girls, and occupy their eyes, which, if not so numerous as Argus's, seemed to Norbert suddenly to have become at least equally sharp and embarrassing.

The experiment succeeded. Lefroy was friends with everybody in ten minutes. A ready, fluent, elastic, dapper little fellow, neither

a prig nor a dandy, but with something of both, not in the least alarming, who took as much pains to make himself agreeable to Millie and Jeanie as if they had been the President of the Royal Academy's daughters, good-humouredly suffered Fan to deride and persecute him in various ingenious ways, and devoutly admired Cressida from a distance—Cressida, of whom he had heard so much from Norbert, and whom he had been brought down expressly to see. Had his verdict been asked, he must have replied that he thought her eyes dangerous, but they were all for Norbert, of course. Lefroy kept apart, and amused himself very well with the three sisters. All his oldest jests, anecdotes, and superannuated table-talk, useless to him in London, or even in his native town of Axbury, were fresh to Millie and Jeanie, so he was never at a loss for conversation. Then he took sketches of the old abbey at Lullington, caricatured Fan, at her particular request, for her private entertainment, and tried to make a drawing of Cressida on the sly.

The elder sisters were full of genuine, gushing admiration for his nimble wit and dexterity. This pleased him well ; for Lefroy had a feminine fondness for sweets, spoiling, and flattery. Nay, one afternoon, as he watched Jeanie lost in smiling wonder and delight over his sketch-book called ' Happy Thoughts in Water-colour,' he began to remark that, though small and pale, she had *rather* a pretty facial outline. There was something appealing, pathetic, in the expression, like the look of a fawning affectionate animal, an attractive touch, of which she was entirely unconscious. More than once he found himself watching her with that half pity that is akin to tenderness.

Lewis Lefroy prided himself on being an outrageous flirt, in a small and unexceptionable way. So far, he had not flirted with Jeanie, but he felt he might begin, if a certain compunction could be got rid of.

Opportunity was not wanting. Mrs. Alleyne was an inexperienced and desultory chaperon. Lefroy was the least dangerous-looking of tame cats; and then (if ever parental imagination did awake), supposing he were to take a fancy to Millie or Jeanie, what of that? True, he was an artist; but, in the first place, he was not dependent on his profession; and, in the second, he had, so to speak, inherited it from his father, a well-to-do Royal Academician; and these facts, in Colonel Alleyne's eyes, placed him apart from, and above, the rabble of scrubby Bohemians. Moreover, the Colonel had not the same superstitious contempt for the brush that he had for the bow; and for the rest, if you are a gentleman at large in the first place, you may be a fireman in the second, if you please, in your leisure hours.

The whole of that afternoon Lefroy had passed with the three girls in the drawing-room. There is nothing in the world he is better fitted for, or enjoys more than kinging it over a lot of women. An old pack of cards has been hunted up, and he is telling the most elaborate fortunes, making the most astounding discoveries, it would seem, respecting the past of the young ladies, and bringing the colour to Jeanie's cheeks by finding curious coincidences between his future and hers. Their paths, he declares, are crossing perpetually, and the powers influencing them are the same.

Romeo and Juliet, as Lefroy calls them, are in the schoolroom. The firelight glows on Cressida's cheek as she sits bending over the

hearth, with a shaggy little dog on her lap—Norbert's last present—which she is nursing affectionately—a lively terrier, with a face all wig and eyes, and that has been christened Quiz, accordingly. How often she has sat there before with Norbert for a *vis-à-vis*! Why should she feel differently to-day? As a fact, she did not. Her engagement seemed to have left her relation to him exactly as before, though now first she had his ring on her finger. Is it that she always loved him, in a way, without knowing it, or—

No, no. She holds to the first belief, as she listens chiefly, and plays with Quiz. Norbert talks, and she gives a word here and there. But love-dialogues are no more to be rendered by making record of the words, than a piece of music can be fully brought by analysis before those who have never heard it. The essence escapes.

They are going over, one by one, the imaginary points of their imaginary drawing-room. There are some bits of furniture at the rectory Cressida means always to have with her—mementoes of old times, of her mother, and Sorrento. Norbert finds a place for them. He happens to mention the piano, on which Cressida observes,

'That piano will always be a reproach to me. I shall never look at it without feeling guilty—for having induced you to abandon your schemes and your first love—St. Cecilia.'

'To forsake the makeshift for the reality,' said Norbert rapidly. 'Give me that, and who cares? Let other people play and sing about it.'

Cressida leant back in her chair, and laughed—a pretty, playful, contented laugh.

'But, Norbert, I am not a saint. Are you so very sure you won't be disappointed in me—leave off

caring about me one of these days, who knows ?

'Folly,' he said, in an undertone ; 'you talk as if we had only met yesterday. Haven't I, all these years, been only wanting your leave to care—as a man can care for nothing else.'

'Dear boy,' she murmured softly, bending forwards, and with a light, caressing, protective movement pushing back the rings of hair from his forehead—just as she had done to Quiz a moment ago.

Norbert—well, he may live long and see not the grave ; he may taste all other life-pleasures, from the lowest to the highest and most intellectual, but will he ever know quite such a sweet hour as that again ?

Alas for Cressida in her unsanctified complexity of emotion ! she cannot shake off that ghastly sense of insincerity. No Juliet, certainly, could have felt more reluctant at the prospect of her Romeo's departure ; but it was because she dreaded its effect on herself—she hardly knew why, except that for her there was a latent feeling of relief behind in that very prospect.

The society of Lewis Lefroy, fluent and fancy-free, a man to whom she was under no obligation to be serious or even rational, was (tell it not in Gath !) a positive refreshment to her that evening when the whole party met.

Dinner was apt to be gloomy at Greywell. 'Food's funeral,' suggested little Lefroy, in a whisper to Jeanie, making her laugh irrepressibly. It was pretty to see her laugh ; joy came like a welcome stranger into her face, and Lefroy took an artist's pleasure in calling it forth. He and Cressida were the life of the party, in their different ways. *Although* Romeo was going to leave at daybreak, Cressida's spirits ran high that

evening. Everybody could see they were not natural, but entered into her desire not to appear downcast before unsentimental witnesses. It was rather a longing for some distraction that made her act thus. She *felt* dejected enough, in all conscience, but the dejection was of the wrong sort.

Not even their united efforts could chase away the gloom that stuck like dry-rot to the Greywell drawing-room. Little Lefroy talked to Jeanie in whispers, as if he were in church, and feeling so, he said. At nine o'clock, however, it so chanced that Colonel Alleyne had to go out to a meeting in Lulington.

As the door closed upon him, a change came o'er the spirit of the room he had left behind. It was as if the words 'Stand at ease !' had been spoken. Countenances cleared and brightened ; moving and speaking seemed easier, the conversation became general and brisk. Before long Cressida found her way to the piano, and presently began a tarantula-like waltz that proved irresistible.

Lefroy, an inveterate dancer, rose at once, and begged Jeanie to be his partner. She had not the presence of mind to demur, and the next moment the pair were whirling round the room, to the consternation of the old china on the brackets, which trembled visibly as they whirled past, unaccustomed to such evolutions.

Fan quickly followed suit with Millie, whilst Norbert looked on, amused, and his mother's heart sank for the furniture.

Presently Cressida broke off and set down Millie to the piano in her stead, with injunctions to play 'anything in three time,' the National Anthem or the Old Hundredth would do, performed thus, and *presto*. She wanted to take 'just one turn' with Mr. Lefroy.

Poor Millie! Her wrists ached, yet the pair went on revolving as smoothly and indefatigably as the earth on its axis, and seeming about as likely to leave off. At last a heavy step in the hall came. The effect was magical; Millie fled from the piano and clutched her worsted work. Cressida flung herself on the ottoman, laughing over her shoulder at Lewis Lefroy, who had snatched up and begun to read the first book within his reach, which chanced to be a volume of sermons, and Colonel Alleyne found his drawing-room as sedate as he had left it.

'Prayers, wine-and-water, and bed,' whispered Lefroy in Cressida's ear, and the three followed in due course.

Lefroy, however, allowed himself the addition of a cigarette. Smoking was prohibited at Greywell, but visitors had a dispensation; and Lefroy, sitting by the open window in his room,—it was a mild night,—puffed away unmolested.

'Wonderfully pretty girl, Norbert's *fiancée*,' thought he. 'No, not pretty exactly, but taking. Clever, too. No, not precisely clever, but sensitive, expert, and full of feminine penetration. I positively *must* sketch her face for my "Century of Fair Women," —a set of drawings of favourite faces of his, and which he hoped might one day reach that figure. 'But how to take down a face like that—that changes every moment.

"I know a maiden fair to see;
Take care—beware—

She can both false and friendly be—"

La, la, la!' and he fell to whistling the tune rather unsuccessfully. When he got to 'Trust her not,' his memory failed him. He began again and again. The third time, lo, the melody was taken up and the air completed for him by a whistler at the win-

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dow beneath. Lefroy was about to applaud, when a door in the passage opened, and a gruff, peremptory voice gave out—

'Norbert, leave off making that noise directly!'

Silence. The door slammed. Presently Lefroy put his head out of the window into the pitchy darkness, and said, in a low voice, cautiously, 'Norbert?'

There came a suppressed burst of laughter—a whisper followed—'Yes. Speak low, please.'

'I didn't know you were in the next box.'

'Yes; No. 3 on the pit-tier,' replied the whisper.

'Will you have a weed? or is smoking "taboo" for you here like whistling?'

'Rather,' with a sigh.

'What a deadly-lively evening it was!' Lefroy rejoined.

'You thought so, did you?'

'Yes, except for the waltz. But you don't dance—ah, I think you haven't an idea of what you lose.'

'Just tell me, how does Cressida waltz?'

'Do you really wish to know? Certainly.'

'Fairly well; a trifle too light. I am longing to make a sketch of her; have tried from memory, but I've set myself an impossible task. Would she sit for me some day, I wonder?'

'Ask her yourself.'

'Well, then, I ask her, myself,' significantly. 'Will you sit to me one of these days?'

Pause.

'Then you have her answer—Never!' indignantly, and the window shut hastily.

'The wretch!' was Cressida's monologue. 'He knew me all the while! Really I must, I *must* not let myself go like this. I shall lose my head one of these days, I know I shall.'

Morning has come, and Norbert

starts off for Axbury. Lewis Lefroy goes with him. He is returning to his home in that neighbourhood, and laughingly promises Cressida to look well after her property during the coming months, and keep him out of mischief. He carries a successful *croquis* of Jeanie in his album, where another leaf bears signs of persevering unfinished attempts at a sketch of Cressida for his 'Centry of Fair Women.'

Jeanie carries his likeness in her heart.

After breakfast Cressida started to walk back to the rectory, with Fan for a companion and Quiz at their heels. The effect of the parting, which had impressed her like a religious ceremony, had been decided. She was brimming over with good resolutions: never to flirt, not to be extravagant in her *trousseau*, to give up dreaming and speculating: she will take to reading instead, and begs Fan to recommend her 'something solid.' They will begin a course of study together to-morrow.

As to Fan, it is not the first time she has remarked, puzzled, how easy it is with Norbert away, and when alone with Cressida to forget this engagement which has made such a change. At such moments it is difficult to believe in that supreme fellowship between her brother and her friend which, in a sense, robs her of both. It has made no visible change in Cressida of any sort.

They cannot, as of yore, take the pleasant way across the Monks' Orchard woods this morning. The new tenants are either arrived or about to arrive, and the lodge-keepers have orders to admit no one who is not bound for the house to the park at all, for which they are not blessed by their neighbours.

'What sort of a person is Mrs. de Saumarez?' asked Fan curiously.

ly. 'You never talk to me about her.'

'Mrs. de Saumarez?' Cressida began, with a biting speech on the tip of her tongue, but she thought better of it, and returned evasively, 'She is a lady of a certain age, who—who dresses exceedingly well.'

'What, even *you* say so?' said Fan merrily.

'Yes, even I owe her many hints. But then she has had twenty years' more experience in the science.'

Fan shrugged her shoulders. 'There you get out of my department. I would sooner go and cry oranges than spend a morning with a milliner.'

'Yes; but then,' said Cressida, 'you don't lose much by it. I like you in the funny simple things you wear, like the drapery round a little statue. I should hate to see you in flounces and furbelows, as I hate them in statuary. But it is different for me. I should look a perfect fright if I did not idealise my dress a little.'

'You manage it well somehow,' said Fan, looking admiringly at her friend's graceful figure. 'You have no idea how picturesque you look in that dark-green frippery, and hat and feather, and silver things—a sort of "queen and huntress," who has lost her bow and quiver.'

'And you,' said Cressida reflectively, 'a little Joan of Arc, who only wants her coat of mail to look the character to perfection.'

'After all, Quiz has the best of it,' laughed Fan. 'Look at his fur; how well it grows and sits, and how perfectly hideous any artificial additions would make him!'

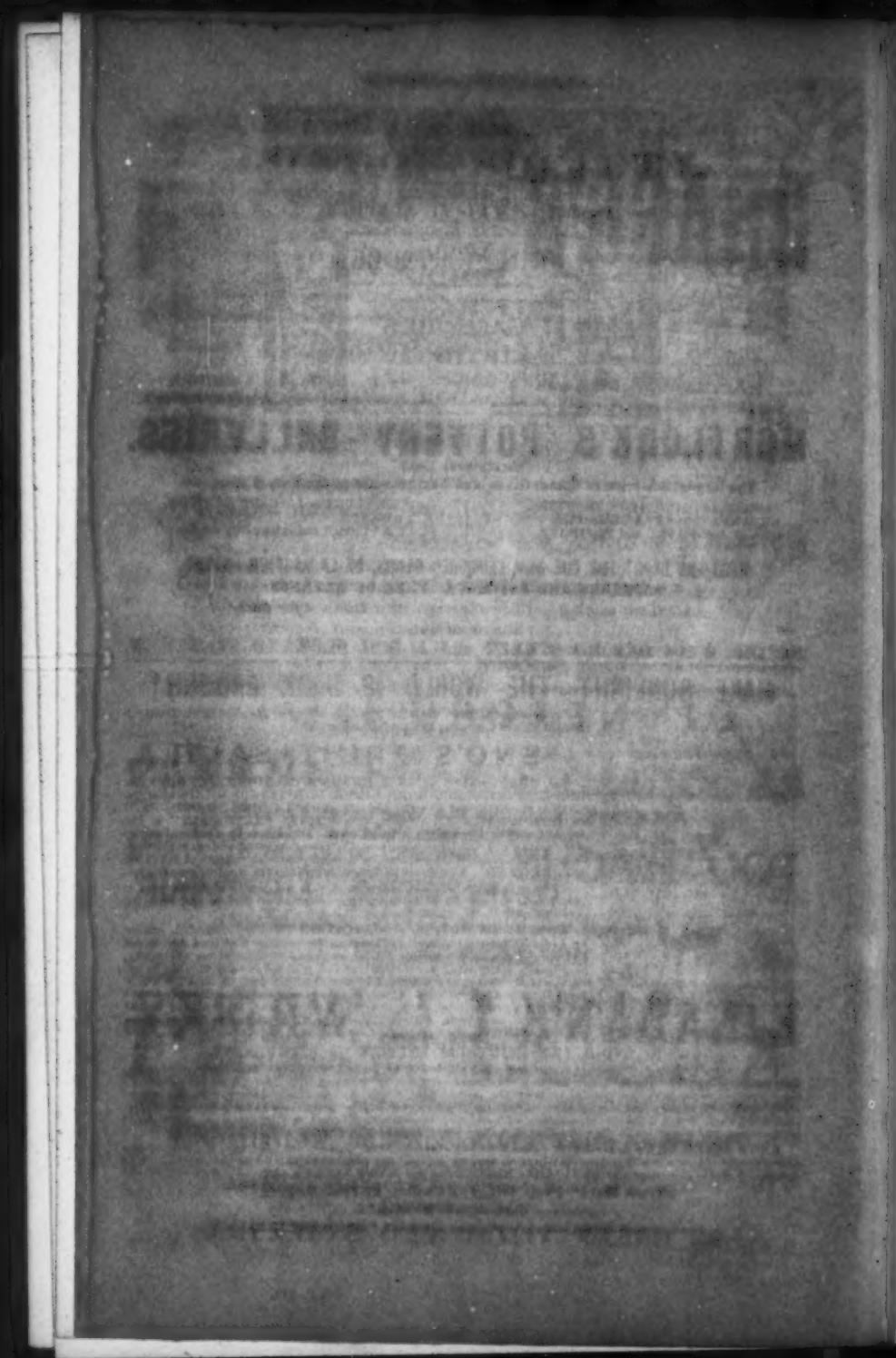
Quiz, all unconscious of being held up as a model, was frisking alongside the park-palings they were skirting, sniffing for rabbits as he went.

'So that's all you have to say



She obeyed instinctively, and stood still in a panic. The next moment the speaker emerged from the brushwood.

See p. all.



about the new lady of the manor,' continued Fan. 'And the young man—have you seen him?'

'Yes,' said Cressida, laughing; 'at least, I have seen his photograph, and I imagine it is much the same thing. He—the photograph—looked in the highest degree pretty and unprincipled, and his stepmother assures me these are his most striking points.'

'He must be a great bear,' said Fan—who held advanced opinions on the subject of property—with decision. 'Look there! And she pointed to a new board that had been set up with a peremptory warning to trespassers, printed in large capitals. 'I call that a very ugly and bad-principled proceeding indeed. I never think a man has any right to keep such a park as that all for his one pair of eyes.'

'O,' said Cressida, whose feelings were all on the other side of the question, having often coveted the domain for herself, 'of course it is his whilst he rents it, his as much as his hat and gloves, to do what he likes with.'

'Maybe,' said Fan; 'but there are hats and gloves enough in the world—or might be—for everybody; so that there would be no good reason for taking a fancy to other people's. But when it comes to things that can't be multiplied for ever and ever, like old pictures or great libraries or beautiful parks—like Monks' Orchard—I think they ought to be thrown open, not monopolised in this fashion.'

Quiz appeared not only to share Fan's opinion, but to be prepared to act upon it then and there. He gave a short sharp bark, as, having spied or scented the rabbit upon which his heart was set, he suddenly squeezed through a hole in the palings, and vanished.

Whistlings, shouts, threats, entreaties, were tried, and all alike in vain.

'He will be caught in a trap, or suffocated in a rabbit-hole!' exclaimed Cressida, in dismay, full of solicitude for her pet—Norbert's last gift. 'No, that he shan't! Wait here for me, Fan, and hold him if he runs out again. The fence seems broken down a little just there.'

And with an agility, not even beneath Fan's admiration, the young lady clambered over the palings and alighted upon the forbidden ground—a fir-wood, carpeted with dead brambles and bracken and live anemone flowers that starred the ground everywhere. She caught a glimpse of the refractory terrier at some distance scampering through the wood. Cressida darted after, across a thicket, into a little willowy bog, up a ravine, and down again, across a thread of a stream into a hazel-copse. Here Quiz suddenly stopped, thrust his nose into a tuft of grass, and Cressida, breathless, was close upon him, when—

'Hullo, you fellow—what are you after there? Stand! Don't run now, or I'll—'

The imperious voice, sharp intonation, the abrupt interruption, gave her a considerable fright. She obeyed instinctively, and stood still in a panic. The next moment the speaker emerged from the brushwood.

A young gentleman with a gun, well-dressed, good-looking, coming forth to meet his poacher, confronts, instead, a wood-nymph in green—a Diana decidedly appalled. On seeing his fearful confusion, which no earthly amount of self-control, or well-bred nonchalance, could enable him to hide, she recovered her nerves pretty quickly.

'I am so very sorry,' she said contritely, though not without a spark of malice and amusement gleaming in her eye, 'it is my little dog.'

He got through the palings, and I was afraid he might get hurt, or do mischief himself, so I—'

'Did you get through the palings too?' he asked, with a smile.

'No; but I got over, and chased and chased him—and had just overtaken and was catching him, when—' And she stopped significantly.

The young man became very red. 'You must forgive me,' he said apologetically. 'It seems that the preserves here have not been looked after of late years, and the Lullington roughs make free with them pretty much as they please; so, when I heard some one in the bushes running away, I took the poacher for granted. What can I do now?'

'Prosecute me according to the utmost rigour of the law,' replied Cressida. 'I was trespassing, if not poaching, you know.'

'At least, let me show my penitence by helping you to find your dog. He went that way, I think.' And he walked along the path with her, whistling and shouting to the dog at intervals, but bestowing the chief part of his attention on Cressida, who on her side was not so taken up with the chase but that she perceived that her companion's glance was expressive of an admiration that was decidedly embarrassing.

'You look quite pale,' he said, in a melancholy tone; 'I am afraid you were startled.'

'I was, desperately,' she answered; 'and I think if I had been the poacher you took me for, I would rather have run away and been shot than have stood my ground and faced you.'

'What! Did I look so forbidding—such a ruffian as that?' he said, with a disconcerted air, as of one very much taken aback, and as if he did not know that his face was an excellent piece of work

which erred, if it erred at all, on the side of over-slenderness and refinement of feature.

Cressida did not answer; and Quiz came to the rescue at this moment by suddenly popping up his head out of a bush by the path. Cressida made a dart at him and secured him in her arms.

The young man looked a little disappointed at this speedy termination of affairs.

'Thank you so much,' she said, turning to him; 'and now I will go back, please.'

'But how?'

'As I came.'

'At least allow me to show you round to the lodge.'

'But I have a friend—a young lady—waiting for me in the road.'

'Indeed you need not return that way,' he urged; 'there is a little gate in the palings close by. I have the key in my pocket, and can let you through.'

'Thank you,' said Cressida, really glad to be relieved from the necessity of repeating herfeat.

She had of course identified her new acquaintance almost immediately, and it was natural she should feel at ease talking to him. He would know her name, and she saw he was burning with curiosity to find it out; but she was quite determined not to gratify him, and his hints and leading questions were frustrated.

As he unlocked the door and lifted his hat, he expressed his hope that he was forgiven, or that at least at some other time he might have the opportunity of making his peace, adding, 'But I am afraid the first impression has been a very unfavourable one.'

'I won't deny that your first address was original and rather brusque,' she replied mirthfully; 'but never mind, I see now that that is only your poacher voice.'

A few steps along the road
brought her to where Fan was
waiting impatiently.

'Cressida, what in the world
has befallen you?'

'Hush, hush!' said Cressida,

laughing irrepressibly. 'An ad-
venture, Fan; the wood is haunt-
ed!'

'Haunted! What, by Mrs.
Kennedy's ghost!'

'No, by its own master!'



Of all the flowers that spring bestows,
My Mary loves the violet best,
And e'en before the gaudy rose
Invites its fragrance to her breast.

But ere a few short hours are fled,
Its freshness gone, its beauty past!
Ah, why on such a genial bed
Could'st thou not live, and longer last?

Perchance inured to chilling showers,
And early spring's yet feeble rays,
Her heart o'er thee too warmly pours
The light of love that round it plays.

Or is it that thou foundest there
Such beauty with such goodness vie,
That, piqued, outshone, in deep despair
Thou droop'st thy purple head to die?

NOBLEMEN IN BUSINESS.

ENGLISH people have frequently betrayed a good deal of sensitiveness at Napoleon's celebrated criticism that we are a 'nation of shopkeepers.' It all depends on the definition—in what we consider the shopkeeping to consist. The old Greeks had a prejudice against retailing—*καπηλίσμιον* was one of their contemptuous words—because they associated it with a petty retailing spirit. But it is not at all true that littleness of mind must necessarily accompany littleness of transactions. There is a famous sentence of Hebrew writ: 'The cities whose merchants were princes, and their traffickers the honourable of the earth.' The merchants of Venice were statesmen and princes; they are for ever recognisable by their pictures and palaces. All through our mediæval cities we have the combination of business and nobility. Nor are our London merchants, in their honest broadcloth, inferior to those who once wore the Tyrian dye or the Venetian velvet. The spirit of commerce now runs like a fibre through all orders of the community, binding together class with class and interest with interest. The present age witnesses the somewhat curious phenomenon of 'noblemen in business.' There was a time when it was thought a great thing for a trader to be raised to the peerage; at present the peers seem busily rushing into the ranks of trade. Every one now can give a list of titled people with connections in business. There is a current rumour to the effect that a great peer is a sleeping partner in one of the

largest retail businesses in the West-end. It is well known that the brothers-in-law of a princess are engaged in commerce. The sons of the Duke of Argyll are pretty well content to lay aside their titles when engaged in business transactions. It has also transpired that Royalty itself—George IV., at least when Prince of Wales—had a business share in one of the London morning papers. Business has sent its fibres throughout all the country, and no class of the community have greater commercial interests than our aristocracy.

The English are emphatically a commercial people; but it is not less true that we are essentially an aristocratic people, and that amongst all classes of the community there is an unmistakable feeling of regard for those who occupy exalted stations. The subscription-list which has a noble lord at its head is likely to be filled far quicker, and with much more respectable sums, than one which lacks this adornment; while we all know the attraction which a title has on the prospectus of a speculative company. The fact is, a respect for aristocratic associations is so deeply woven into our thoughts and habits, that it has become a second nature to us. This characteristic national feeling has of course its commercial phase. Many scions of noble houses have earned lots of guineas by fees as directors, or still greater remuneration as promoters. It is not too much to say, however, that litigation in the law-courts must almost have put a stop to the business of

the promoter. Coutts's bank may be taken as a conspicuous instance of the alliance between business and nobility. The daughter of the head of the firm, Miss Marjoribanks, was lately married to the Earl of Aberdeen; and one of the partners is Mr. Dudley Ryder, a son of the Earl of Harrowby. At the time of great commercial crises the aristocratic element has been singularly and sadly revealed. Such a crisis was that of the South Sea Bubble Company, in which an immense number of noble families were involved. The same may be said of events of a very recent date—the bubble companies of 1825, the railway year of 1845, and the disastrous financial years of 1857 and 1866. In fact, our noble houses have never felt any repentance or compunction for being concerned in commerce. It was perhaps something different with the old *noblesse* in France. Sterne has a pretty story in his *Sentimental Journey* of a baron or count who, intending to go into business, laid up his sword in the public archives until such time that he should make his fortune in trade and reclaim it. He reclaims it at last, and drops upon it one of those happy tears which Sterne always had at his disposal. At the present day no nobleman would think sword or escutcheon dimmed by contact with gold earned in commerce. Indeed, as the estates of many of our great nobles have developed in value and become connected with industrial pursuits, the nobleman who wishes thoroughly to understand his own possessions must have certain business and commercial qualities. Some nobles spend the best part of their lives in a business office, and work steadily, with a brief interlude for biscuit and sherry, from ten till four. They have to keep ledgers and

day-books; have stewards and secretaries; be bothered with lawyers and architects; and, on the whole, have rather a hard time of it. Some of them like it, and think that life would be very tolerable 'if it were not for its amusements;' but, upon the whole, the incessant contemplation even of one's intense solvency must be monotonous. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

It would be impossible, in the limited space at our disposal, to attempt anything like an exhaustive review of the many families which have obtained their wealth through business, and have since been ennobled by the favour of the sovereign. It is surprising how many there are which owe their position entirely to successful trade. And this, indeed, is the strength of the peerage, this it is which harmonises it with our other institutions—that it is not a distinct caste, but a distinguished body of the people raised from among the others, chosen in the main for intrinsic worth as those whom the king delighteth to honour. It is this which makes it an inseparable part of our social and political systems, and causes it to stand firm and secure amidst the shocks of revolutions, which in other countries have overwhelmed kings and nobles with calamity and ruin. The old *noblesse* of France had nothing like it. The instances are numerous where the foundation of the peerage has been laid by commerce, and the commerce only thrown aside when the dignity was already won, and in some cases has not been thrown aside at all. The most prominent is perhaps that of the Baring family. Francis Baring, a Lutheran minister, came to England about a century ago, and his grandsons established

themselves in business in London. The younger brother, Francis, had the chief management of the concern, and so successful was he that Lord Shelburne, who called him the 'prince of merchants,' recommended him for a baronetcy. Sir Francis left the business to his sons, and it ultimately centred in the second one, Alexander, whose financial influence over the continental cabinets was so potent that the Duc de Richelieu called him one of the 'great powers of Europe,' while at home he received the familiar title of 'Alexander the Great.' While still at the head of his house of business he was created Lord Ashburton, and became famous as the British representative at Washington in 1842, when the treaty was negotiated which bears his name. Nor was this the only title that the family gained; for the third baronet was created Baron Northbrook in 1866, and his son, the late Viceroy of India, has recently been raised to the dignity of an earldom. So that the titles of Ashburton and Northbrook have both been derived directly from the mercantile success of the great house of Barings.

Other similar instances might be mentioned even at the time when the prejudice against associating the peerage with commerce was the strongest. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall tells us in his *Memoirs*, that 'Throughout his whole reign George III. adopted as a fixed principle that no individual engaged in trade, however ample might be his nominal fortune, should be created a British peer,' yet he mentions that this rule was not without an illustrious exception; for Lord Carington, whose family was brought so prominently before public notice in Buckinghamshire elections, was elevated to the peerage 'when

George III. was king,' and owed the dignity to the mercantile success of his father, a Nottingham banker, who bore the plebeian name of Smith. A facetious friend once wrote on his front-door :

'Bobby Smith lives here;
Billy Pitt made him a peer,
And took the peer from behind his ear.'

The well-known story about the late Lord Tenterden shows the greatness and true nobility of the man, when he pointed out to his son a little shed opposite Canterbury Cathedral, and said: 'Charles, you see this little shop; I have brought you here on purpose to show it you. In that shop your grandfather used to shave for a penny; that is the proudest reflection of my life.' The present Lord Tenterden made a pilgrimage to Canterbury to see the little shop, but found it improved off the face of the earth.

It is in the great industrial development of modern days that our peerage has made its largest commercial gains. With geographical limits inexorably fixed, and without the possibilities of indefinite extension, as in Russia and America, our great land-owners will have a lucky tendency to become richer and richer; in Johnsonian phrase, 'potentialities of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice.' Some amongst the most wealthy and illustrious are still engaged in occupations of a very remunerative nature. There is a whole class of noblemen who are traders on the largest scale. Conspicuous amongst them we find the Earl of Dudley, whose coal and limestone mines, besides his extensive ironworks, have been a source of enormous profit. The coal and iron trades have recently passed through great and disastrous variations; but it was only a few years ago that they were

both at the height of prosperity, and, if rumour in the Black Country is to be trusted, Lord Dudley in those days made from them a very considerable revenue. The country of black diamonds ought to be seen by night. By day its chief characteristic is an accumulation of cinder-heaps and innumerable chimneys, from which proceed the blackest and foulest smoke ; it is like the place where Satan and his rebellious followers first rested—a ‘dismal situation waste and wild’ ; but by night it is far more picturesque, and bears out Milton’s further description of those nether regions, which

‘On all sides round,
As one great furnace, flamed ; yet from
those flames
No light, but rather darkness, visible.’

From the tall chimneys the bright flames shoot up into the air, and cast on every surrounding object a strange lurid glare. A very uninviting spot this would seem for the aesthetic development of the toiling masses, so little is there of Nature’s beauty to be found ; yet we ought not to forget that Dudley has one quiet retreat, one sequestered spot where Nature is still lovely ; for the spacious grounds surrounding the ruined castle, with all their winding paths and secluded avenues, are open to the free use of the grimy colliers. The coal and iron trades have found employment for the capital of other peers, whose names are familiar, amongst which we might mention that of Earl Granville, the courteous leader of her Majesty’s Opposition, who has extensive ironworks near Etruria in Staffordshire, and whose workmen, we understand, have taken a great interest in returning their chosen member for Stoke-on-Trent. There is also Earl Fitzwilliam, whose coal-mines

afford the means of subsistence to so many families in the neighbourhood of Rotherham, near Sheffield. Some time ago he caused all his mines to be closed, on account of a strike which he considered unreasonable, and for a long while he persisted in his refusal to reopen them.

There is one trade which we believe has been more prosperous than ever during the recent period of depression, which is very largely in the hands of a peer of the realm. We refer to the quarrying of slate and the extensive works of Lord Penrhyn, near Bangor. A slate-quarry must be seen to be understood. The whole of the mountain-side is cut into ledges, upon which the observer from below can see only a number of small figures moving about, very much resembling animated dolls. The slate is first loosened by blasting, and is then removed by manual power. So extensive are these works near Bangor that upwards of three thousand men and boys are employed, and a flourishing little town has been formed, called Bethesda, which is dependent solely upon them for support. From Bethesda the slate is taken to Port Penrhyn, about six miles distant, to be shipped to its ultimate destination ; and it is estimated that, taking into consideration those who are employed at the port and in transit, Lord Penrhyn, directly and indirectly, furnishes means of subsistence to as many as 10,000 people. The highest praise, we ought to add, is due to Lord Penrhyn for his constant anxiety and solicitude for the moral and material welfare of those who are dependent upon him. Bethesda, in addition to any amount of public-houses, possesses some valuable institutions, such as schools, church, and hospital, for which it is in-

debted to the generosity of the Pennant family, who do not subscribe to the vile heresy of treating their employés as so many hands, but set an example which might well be imitated by large employers of labour.

There is often a great advantage to a town, as well as to the individual nobleman, when the capital of a peer is invested in some great commercial undertaking, or takes the direction of improving and developing the town itself. The Duke of Devonshire, the very model of a business man, has been doing a great work in the two towns, where he is a large land-owner, of Buxton and Eastbourne. Cardiff is a typical instance. It was once an insignificant place, whither coal was brought down on the backs of mules to the tiny wharf of a little creek belonging to the port of Bristol. It was known chiefly to the traveller as a place situated near to the cathedral village of Llandaff. Now the relative importance of the two places is entirely altered; Cardiff is a busy town and thriving port, while Llandaff is its suburb, as Clifton is a suburb to Bristol. The late Marquis of Bute, to whose enterprising spirit the rise of this town is entirely due, possessed, in addition to some 25,000 acres of the Glamorganshire hills, rich with mineral treasures, a large tract of moorland, desolate and bare, in front of the small town of Cardiff. Several schemes were suggested to him for utilising this land, and he at last determined on supplying the town with docks. In this great enterprise the Marquis is popularly reported, as was also said of that great commercial nobleman the Duke of Bridgewater, to have hazarded almost his last penny; but in the issue the docks have been successful

—far more successful than the canals. The present Marquis was only an infant when he came into the title. The trustees carried out all the plans of his father, and Lord Bute, we believe, instead of appropriating the vast income derived from the docks, devotes it to the further expansion of the port. The Marquis is the owner of large fields of that smokeless coal which is now preferred by all the navies of the world. Lord Bute inherits the genius of his family in being an immense builder; and as his house in his Scottish isle has been recently burnt down, he will have a further opportunity for exercising his capacity this way. About one half of the great town of Cardiff belongs to him, of course including the castle, which, reconstructed once, is receiving another reconstruction. The east end, which is practically the 'west end,' of Cardiff belongs to Lord Tredegar, and is called after him Tredegarville. His land adjoins Lord Bute's, and he may possibly have a port to compete with Lord Bute's. A curious point has, however, been raised to the effect that the Crown is the owner of the beach from low-water to high-water mark, and may on occasion assert its rights. Many other instances might be given of the vast commercial interests of the nobility. The great ironworks which are the property of the Duke of Cleveland might be mentioned. The Duke of Westminster is, we believe, greatly engaged in building transactions. He is the landlord of the two Houses of Parliament. Within recent years his Westminster property has been enormously developed, and will soon be entirely covered with sumptuous buildings. The Earl of Derby owns a great part of Liverpool; the Duke of

Norfolk owns a great part of Sheffield; the Earl of Kimberley owns a good deal of Falmouth. Lord Macaulay said, according to Mr. Trevelyan's work, that he would not exchange his position for all the wealth which Lord Dudley had below the ground, or Lord Westminster above it. The town of Brighton affords several illustrations of our subject. The Earl of Chichester has a good deal of property in the east end, but being disappointed in an election he abjured the place, beyond presenting it with a cemetery as a solemn warning. He is now taking his part in the remarkable development of the place. In the west of Brighton there is a large estate, now being rapidly converted into a huge suburb, but which lay fruitless during a long minority. The estate was originally purchased for 40,000*l.*; a small bit of it was sold for 43,000*l.*; and now the building revenue is 40,000*l.* The heiress is of course married to a scion of the nobility.

Something more may be said respecting such a commercial Colossus as the Duke of Westminster. Some reminiscences of the growth of the Grosvenor family are pointed out by Mr. J. C. Hare in his last work, *Walks in London*. Just behind Berkeley-square is Bourdain House, once a little manor-house in the country. Here lived one Mary Davies, a country heiress, who married one Sir Thomas Grosvenor, and the enormous increase in the value of her paternal acres has made the Grosvenor family perhaps the richest in Europe. The neighbouring streets, Farm-street, Hill-street, Hay-hill, Hay-mews, recall 'the old manorial dwelling.' Among the possessions of the Davies family was a certain Ebury Farm in Pimlico. When Buckingham

Palace became Crown property, George III. foresaw that the district would become fashionable, and he wished to purchase Ebury Farm. He had fifty acres of ground with the Palace. These are well-wooded grounds, with a lake of five acres and a pavilion adorned with scenes from *Comus* by MacLise, Eastlake, Dyce, Leslie, Stanfield, and others. In the northern part of these grounds there was once a place of popular entertainment, of which Evelyn says it was 'the only place of refreshment about town for persons of the best quality to be exceedingly cheated at.' Goring House was afterwards built on this site, called Arlington House after its sale to Lord Arlington in the year of the Great Fire. This Lord Arlington was concerned in a memorable act of business. He bought in Holland for sixty shillings the first pound of tea ever introduced into England; and the first cup of tea was probably brewed in what are now the Buckingham Palace gardens. George III. wished to buy the fields at the back of his spacious gardens; but the price was twenty thousand pounds, and Lord Grenville, the Prime Minister, thought it was too much to give. The result was that a little more than a hundred years ago Grosvenor-place was built overlooking the Palace grounds, and to some extent spoiling their seclusion. Behind Grosvenor-place were the 'Five Fields'—marshy ground which, according to the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, had its name as a waiting place of robbers. Several noblemen wished to do a piece of business in buying these fields. Lord Cowper sent an agent to buy them; but the agent came back, in Greek phrase, *ἀπάρτε*. 'Really, my lord,' he said, 'I could not find it in my heart to give two hundred pounds more than they

were worth.' Lord Grosvenor was more astute. He did the best bit of trade known among noble traders. He bought the fields for thirty thousand pounds. Cubitt afterwards offered an annual ground-rent of sixty thousand pounds. We may mention, from Mr. Hare, that the marsh was wrought into a firm basis by earth brought from the excavations of St. Katherine's Docks.

We may take another instance of wealth poured into wealthy families by prosperous commerce. Oxford-street does not derive its name from Oxford, the famous seat of the University of that name—albeit it is the road from Oxford—but from Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford, the lord of the manor of Tyburn. Edward Harley married Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, whence we get Henrietta-street, Holles-street, and Cavendish-square. Later, William Bentinck, Duke of Portland, the names of whose country houses have given us Welbeck-street and Bolsover-street, married Margaret Cavendish Harley, and so joined the Bloomsbury and Marylebone estates; and this junction finds its names in Bentinck-street, Holles-street, Vere-street, Margaret-street, Cavendish-street, Harley-street, Foley-place, Weymouth-street. It is very remarkable how often the fortunes of noble houses have been made or consolidated by lucky marriages. We have heard the lines addressed to the Hapsburgs applied by a Cabinet Minister to a well-known noble house :

'Bella gerant alii: tu, felix Austria,
nube:
Nam quo Mars aliis dat tibi regna
Venus.'

And unhappily, as the private history of some great houses shows, to bring a vast property within a ring-fence, or to pay off heavy mortgages, January and May have

intermarried, and the transaction has essentially been a commercial one.

Of course we do not find noblemen actually engaged in the personal transaction of business, unless, indeed, in the service of the Crown. But the extent to which they are 'sleeping partners' in 'going concerns' is greater than might be imagined. Two illustrations might be given of this. Take, for instance, the vast shipping interest which our country, with the largest carrying trade in the world, is concerned. Each ship is divided as a rule into sixty-four shares, and the number of shares taken up by men of rank in this unusually profitable kind of investment is immense. Again, look at the Joint-Stock Banks. An immense number of shares, as may be seen by the printed lists, are held by noblemen; and, as in the case of the Overend & Gurney Bank, they have been severely mulcted at times. The greatest business of all in our day is that of money-making, and it makes it none the less because rank is also an element in the matter. In the dining-room of Tortworth Court there is the portrait of the worthy tradesman, one of the good Izaak Walton kind, who made the fortunes of the house of Ducie; and no such honest ancestor should be ignored among the effigies of a house ennobled through commerce.

A very curious chapter might be written on another aspect of our subject. This would be occupied with the cases in which noblemen have voluntarily abandoned their titles and estates, have identified themselves with the proletariat class, and have not only become business men, but working men and labourers. The case of the late Earl of Aberdeen was something of the kind. There

never was a more devout, amiable, lovable man—his character was thoroughly in accordance with the noble stock from which he sprang ; yet he became the mate of a mere trading-vessel, and that was his position when he was lost at sea. A still more remarkable case is that of a nobleman who became a working man, lived in a small row of houses, and married a woman of the order in which he enrolled himself. There is the *noblesse* order and the *ouvrrière* order, each very good in its way, but totally different. Most workmen would like to be noblemen ; but there are also to be met philosophical people who have distinctly preferred the industrial order. Most noblemen, however, who take to business do so from the keen appreciation of the trader's profit, and the desire to secure the advantages that may be derived from the combination of the two systems. Nevertheless there have been noblemen who have shut up their vast houses in town and country, and have gone of set purpose among the industrial classes, and have found their homes and connections among them. Not only is there the far-famed Lord of Burleigh, but we have the romantic stories of a Byron and a Lovelace. We all know the wandering habits of Haroun Alraschid, who loved to wander forth in disguise ; and some modern nobles who have played the rôle have found at times that their assertion of their Alraschidship has been disagreeably discredited. But there are noblemen who have effaced themselves, who have found their brides in cottages and behind counters, and who have left a quantity of trouble to their successors, or have left the question of successionship doubtful. The largest instance of the importation of noblemen into

business was at the commencement of the Revolution in the case of the *émigré* nobility of France. On the sudden impoverishment of an ancient and illustrious order men rushed into every avenue of employment, from teaching French and the fiddle to every business where the highest faculties and education might be brought into play. Neither should the ladies be passed over. The *prima donna* of an opera is often a *marchesa*. Among foreign ladies who sometimes condescend to be English governesses you have combined the *comtesse* and the *baronne*. They are often disappointed in the effect of their titles ; for English ladies are naturally unwilling to engage as dependents those who would at the same time claim a social superiority.

The phenomenon of trading peers raised legal points of long duration and much complexity. As early as 1747 Lord Chancellor Hardwicke pronounced the dictum so often quoted in the discussion of this question, that 'though there may be some particular powers the Commissioners of Bankruptcy could not exercise against a peer, yet notwithstanding this he may be liable to a commission of bankruptcy if he will trade ;' and shortly after an Act of Parliament was passed which removed any doubt that might exist as to the validity of this dictum. In 1849 the bankruptcy law was consolidated in one Act, and by this it was provided 'that if any trader having privilege of Parliament shall commit any act of bankruptcy, he may be dealt with under this Act in like manner as any other trader,' the exception still being made that the debtor was not to be liable to arrest. In 1861 a fresh Act was passed, for the purpose of making all debtors subject to the

bankruptcy laws, whether engaged in trade or not. So stood the law, when in 1869 an application was made to Mr. Commissioner Winslow to declare the Duke of Newcastle bankrupt on the ground that his insolvency rendered him liable under the Act of 1861, though he was not in any way engaged in trade. The Commissioner held that he was not liable under the Act, and an appeal was accordingly made to the Court of Chancery. Here the matter was elaborately argued, his grace being represented by no less able a person than the present Lord Selborne. The court, however, held that the application of the words in dispute must be as extensive as the application of the same words in the statute of 1849. A new Act which came into operation in 1870 set the question at rest by declaring 'that if a person with privilege of Parliament commits an act of bankruptcy he may be dealt with under this Act in like manner as if he had not such privilege.' To this a willing assent had been given by both branches of the legislature, and the liability of a peer to be made a bankrupt was thus fully and finally acknowledged. The prospect that many peers might perhaps be anxious to avail themselves of their newly ascertained privilege seems to have caused some alarm to our hereditary legislators, and in the following year a fresh Act was passed, in which it was declared to be 'necessary for the preservation of the dignity and independence of Parliament that bankrupts should

be disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Lords,' and it was accordingly provided that 'every peer who becomes a bankrupt shall be disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Lords or in any committee thereof; and further, if a peer of Scotland or Ireland, shall be disqualified from being elected to sit and vote in the House of Lords.' The law of the land therefore has fully recognised the status of 'noblemen in business,' and has dealt with it in the spirit of absolute fairness and impartiality.

The application of the law is one of the rarest social phenomena of our day. That noblemen should be engaged in business is an absolute necessity of our time, when commerce extends indefinitely on every side. The peerage form our largest land-owners, and there is not a port, or a railway, or a town whose prosperity is not identified with that of the main owners of the soil. The high honour and straightforwardness of our nobility is itself a guarantee of the highest commercial value. The political value of this blending of classes is very great. It links together different interests and different orders, and imparts much of their solidity to our English institutions. The phenomenon of noblemen in business ought to have the effect, not of bringing the pettiness of detail into the spirit of our nobility, but of bringing the chivalrous spirit of nobility into the operations of commerce.

A SCHOOL BOARD PUZZLE :

My Little Tour with Mr. Whimble.

My somewhat extensive circle of mixed acquaintance includes a worthy individual who is attached to the School Board Commission in the capacity of visitor. He was formerly a lender out of Bath-chairs and a purveyor of asses' milk at the West-end. It was a mistake on his part to abandon those lucrative paths of life to become a 'visitor.' Nature has not fitted him for it. The person best fitted for the post in question is a rigid disciplinarian, with no more bowels of compassion than a mummy, and with no eyes, no ears, no human sense at all but such as guides him to the exact discharge of the stern commands he receives from head-quarters. Unfortunately for my friend the ex-ass-dairyman, he differs as widely from such a man as the flintiest chalk from the mellowest cheese of Cheshire. He is a middle-aged stout man, brimming full of benevolence, and is kindly disposed towards children, especially those of tenderest age, as any matron of the Foundling Hospital. You would never judge this from his appearance, however. He looks sour-visaged and austere enough to sit for the portrait of the ogre who meditated breakfasting on Jack and his seven brothers. I feel convinced that it was the last-mentioned circumstance that stood him in good stead when he applied for an appointment. It was the most disastrous step he ever took in his life. The last time I was in his company he looked so utterly miserable and wretched, that I seriously advised him to resign. But he was inexorable.

'If I did so, sir,' was his reply, 'I should never again know another day's happiness. I would not so much care if it was only the grown-up people who were so cruelly oppressed by the operation of the Compulsory Education Act under which I hold my humble office; it is the knowledge that the little children, the mere babes and sucklings, are made to suffer so severely that sorely afflicts me. Far be it from me to impute blame to any one concerned, least of all those who sit at head-quarters; but it does seem hard that helpless infants should have to pay so heavily towards the reckoning.'

'But,' said I, 'you should bear in mind that the whole community take their share of the burden. Tens of thousands of ratepayers whose children receive no benefit from Board schools are compelled to contribute handsomely towards their erection and maintenance, not to mention the very large number who have no children at all; and since it is that very class of persons with whom you so deeply sympathise who come in for nine-tenths of the prospective, if not present, advantage arising from these excellent institutions, including the babies, it seems to me not unreasonable that they should be called on with the rest to put a helping shoulder to the wheel.'

But Mr. Whimble, the name of the benevolent visitor, shook his head. 'That may be perfectly correct as regards one phase of the question,' he replied, 'but between you and me, sir, it remains to be seen whether education invariably

goes hand-in-hand with virtue, and that to provide for a child's passing the required "standard," will insure his eschewing the objectionable ways of life his father before him led. I am a nice sort of School Board visitor, you will say, to give utterance to such heretical language, but I can't help it. Besides, sir, those who are in a better position to judge are not without doubts similar to those that trouble me. Take the chaplain of Newgate, for instance. In his very last report he made bold to say that from his experience he much questioned whether compulsory education would lessen the number of rogues and rascals. The only difference we should find, according to the opinion of the reverend gentleman mentioned, would be that the rogue of the future would be more keen and clever than the rogue of the past, and consequently the more difficult to deal with. But it is not that view of the matter that strikes me as being the most serious, sir. It is the awful amount of demoralisation that the carrying out of the principles of the Act causes in poor families. It may be all very well to make the matter a subject for a funny picture in *Punch* or the groundwork for a farce for folks to laugh at, but the hard fact remains that amongst the lower orders, where wives as well as husbands are compelled to work to make both ends meet, there is an alarming falling off in paternal affection. The School Board insists on the elder children of a family attending school, and the consequence is that on the mother, whose earnings have hitherto contributed substantially to the replenishing of the cupboard, devolves the sole care of her baby, and she can do nothing else. And the end of it is, sir,' continued Mr. Whimble impressively, 'that

there are short rations at every meal, and that bread that used to be decently buttered is now eaten dry. And not in content, I am sorry to say; the cause of the unwelcome change being constantly present either in its mother's arms or in the cradle. The poor infant, sir, is no longer an object of love in the family. Its mother, of course, will cling to it, but the father hardens his heart against it; and the elder children, who, on its account, are placed on short commons, regard it as a—a sort of young Dragon of Wantley,' said Mr. Whimble, hard driven for a simile, 'and wish that it had never been born. While as for me, sir, and my brother visiting-officers, we are more rudely treated and more detested by the people it is our duty to call on than tax-gatherers or water-rate collectors.'

It was then that I remarked to Mr. Whimble, 'Why don't you resign, since the occupation agrees so ill with you ?'

'I will tell you why, sir,' he answered confidentially: 'because of the number of Board visitors at present engaged in the service there are by no means too many of the humane and considerate sort. It is little enough, goodness knows, that I am able to do for the poor things. As you say, sir, the occupation does not agree with me, and I am not sure that it is honest of me to continue it, holding the opinions I do; but I can't bear the thought of resigning, and there being a *real* griffin instead of a *make-believe* one appointed in my stead. I should like you or any other impartial person to accompany me one day on my round, and witness the kind of treatment to which even I, with all the goodwill I bear them, am treated.'

I took Mr. Whimble at his word, and within a week was his companion on a 'visiting' expedition.

For obvious reasons I may not mention the particular district which includes the beat assigned to Mr. Whimble, but for the sake of Board visitors generally I hope there are others less trying to a man's patience and good-nature. My friend was provided with a list of about thirty defaulters, on whom it was his duty to call to inform them that unless they straightway sent the little absentees to school, or gave him a good reason for their continued truancy, he should be compelled to summon them before a magistrate. Nothing particular marked the first half dozen calls; but when Mr. Whimble came to the seventh on the list, he intimated that now probably I should see an example of the difficulties he had occasionally to contend against. Approaching a door which stood open, and was without a knocker, he rapped at it with the knob of his walking-stick.

'I wish to see Mrs. Walkinshaw,' he politely remarked to a little girl who presently made her appearance.

The lady herself, however, was within ear-shot.

'Lord bless us, do you now?' (this in a shrewish voice and with withering sarcasm.) 'And why didn't you send a telegraph to say you was coming, or a outrider on horseback?' (At this point Mrs. Walkinshaw appeared at the head of the kitchen stairs, drying soap-suds from her arms with her apron.) 'O, I see, you comes in pairs now, do you? as though one of you wasn't enough. But I ain't afraid of the old kit of you. Now what do you want?'

She was a woman remarkable for bone and muscle, and wore her red hair tied in a hard knot at the back of her head. She came up the passage with a military stride, and brought herself within half

a yard of my companion with a stamp. He took a step backward in some alarm, but, as I was glad to see, put a bold face on the matter.

'Tut-tut! You ought to know by this time, Mrs. Walkinshaw, the effect this kind of nonsense has on me. I have called respecting your children.'

'What about 'em?' returned Mrs. Walkinshaw defiantly.

'They were absent from school the whole of last week.'

'Ho, indeed!'

'Yes; and the week before as well. Now, my good lady, you know that this won't do. Why do you persist in disobeying the law?'

Mrs. Walkinshaw's demeanour suddenly underwent a complete change. With mock humility she folded her arms on her bony bosom, and begged that the gentleman—if he *was* a gentleman—would be so kind as to 'speechify' which of her children he was so condescending as to allude to; 'because—hem!—unfortunately I've got a many of 'em,' said she, dropping a curtsey.

'Well, there's Louisa, aged nine, and there's—'

'One at a time, if *you* please, sir, *my* children not being cattle in a medder. You spoke of my daughter Louisa, if I don't mistake?'

'Yes.'

'Louisa,' returned Mrs. Walkinshaw, with dignity, 'has a habcess under her arm, if the School Board has no objections.'

'It was ringworm last time, if I rightly remember,' remarked the visitor, in a tone that mildly denoted doubt. 'Where is she?'

'She's gone out for a hairing.'

'For a herring?' asked Mr. Whimble, who was slightly hard of hearing.

'Thank you for the correction, sir, but a hairing I said, and a hairing I mean.'

'Well, well; and what about Jane, aged twelve?'

'Jane, haged twelve, is at the present moment down-stairs in the washus.'

'Well, she ought to be at school, you know that very well. Why don't you send her?'

'Jane, haged twelve,' repeated Mrs. Walkinshaw, not heeding the visitor's last observation, 'is nussing the baby—'

'But you are perfectly well aware—'

'Which is full out in measles.'

And she smiled sweetly, and dropped him another curtay.

'That of course alters the case. You must keep Jane at home.'

'It is my intention to send her to school this afternoon, summonings not being required.'

'That you must not-do,' exclaimed Mr. Whimble, in alarm.

'Good heavens! how can you think of such a wicked thing?'

It was evident to me that Mrs. Walkinshaw had carried her point.

'Very good, sir; since you say it, I'll keep Jane at home,' she replied, with an unmistakable twinkle of triumph in her eyes.

'What do you think of that?' he asked me, as we came away from the house.

'It would not very much surprise me if you have been imposed on,' I replied.

'I am afraid so too, I am very much afraid so,' rejoined the soft-hearted visitor, pausing and looking back towards Mrs. Walkinshaw's residence, as though of a good mind to return and renew the attack; 'but what the deuce is a fellow to do? That poor woman to my knowledge has eight youngsters to keep by her hard earnings at the wash-tub; she is a widow, and Jane, aged twelve, is her right hand in a manner of speaking. I hope the

woman has spoken the truth, that's all. No, I don't,' he continued, hurriedly correcting himself; 'if the baby has got measles they'll all catch it, and there'll be a pretty thing for the poor soul. It is all through the baby, sir. But how can a man possessed of a spark of feeling act harshly towards a fatherless creature without a tooth in its head?'

A short time afterwards we made a call on a female less formidable to face, perhaps, than the vixenish mother of Louise and Jane, but on the whole an even more difficult subject to treat with in the case of a man of Mr. Whimble's tender susceptibilities. She was a poorly clad, pale woman, and she opened the door to us with a baby in her arms, and three other little ones clinging to her skirts.

'I am sorry to have to trouble you again, Mrs. Winnick,' said Mr. Whimble, giving the baby a propitiatory pat on the cheek with his pencil, 'but your daughter Emily was again absent from school last week.'

'Sir,' responded Mrs. Winnick, with a sad smile, 'I am aware of it, but you shall not have occasion to complain again.'

'Come, that's better,' exclaimed the visitor, brightening up; 'matters are mending with you, eh? Your husband has got better and gone to work again?'

'My husband, sir,' returned Mrs. Winnick, with the meek resignation of a Christian martyr, 'is, of the two, a little worse than he was when you called last time. Another place is broke out in his leg; and the doctor says he will never get well without he has proper nourishment, which of course is out of the question. You know that, sir, and the reason why.'

Poor Mr. Whimble looked ter-

ribly distressed, and shook his head in feeble protest against the last insinuation.

'I am sorry that I was mistaken, ma'am. I made sure, from your cheerful manner, that Emily was going regularly to school again.'

'And so she shall go regular,' returned Mrs. Winnick firmly, but at the same time drying her eyes on the baby's bedgown; 'if she has, which is most likely, to follow her father to his grave, I give you my word she shall only be absent for a half-day. I have made up my mind, sir, since it is your wish and desire, Emily shall go to school, and we will take the consequences, be what they may.'

'As far as I am concerned, Mrs. Winnick, as you are aware, I am always willing to do the best I can for you. But beyond a certain point I am powerless, and must do my duty, however painful I may find it.'

'Quite so, sir,' returned Mrs. Winnick, regarding the unfortunate visitor more in sorrow than in anger; 'as you say, sir, since you have lent yourself as a weapon of oppression in the hands of those who are so hard on us, so be it. Having at your wish and desire to send my girl Emily to school, I must nurse my baby myself. Having to nurse my baby myself, I can do no work. Doing no work, we must all starve.' And then in a tremulous voice, and with a hand on Mr. Whimple's arm, she added, 'Heaven forbid, sir, that you may hereafter be looked on in the same light as you look on yourself, and that you may not be held responsible. We bear you no animosity, sir, and hope that in your last moments you may not be disturbed by any thought of us.'

And by this time, weeping copiously, she bade us good-day, and showed us out.

Despite his expressed determination to the contrary, poor Mr. Whimple was so deeply affected by this interview, that I almost think had I not been with him to cheer him up a bit, that he would on the spot have borrowed pen, ink, and paper of Mrs. Winnick, and written and sent in his resignation to the Board there and then. He did the best he could under the painful circumstances, however. Designedly—he declared it was accidental—he left his gloves behind him, and made one of the children a present of half-a-crown when it came running after him with them. I could not but remark that Mr. Whimple had no heart of tenderness for boys; indeed, he seemed to compromise with his conscience, which no doubt reproached him, for his unofficial consideration for little girls and babies, by comporting himself with harshness that bordered on ferocity towards every 'under thirteen' young ragamuffin at large he happened to encounter. He delighted to come on them unaware when they were absorbed in games at marbles or pitch a nicker, and slipping his book and pencil into his pocket, and his walking-stick under his arm, would 'collar' a brace of them at once, and shake out of them a statement (not always a veracious one, I am afraid) of where they lived and what their age was. One reckless Arab of ten, relying too confidently on his stoutness, had the audacity to defy him with his fingers to his nose, adding greatly to the exasperation by a jeering reminder to Mr. Whimple of the peculiar nature of the dairy business in which he formerly was engaged. To the young reprobate's consternation, the visitor gave speedy chase, and the former only escaped by leaving his cap and one of his braces in Mr.

Whimble's hands, that gentleman having grimly informed him of his private address, where, on personal application, he could recover the impounded articles. At every fresh foray the persecuted visitor declared that 'these confounded boys' were the one plague of his existence; but I rather think that he got on better with than without them. Indeed, I could not but remark that, whenever an unusually affecting visiting case depressed his spirits, he invariably fell back on a skirmish with his young male friends by way of reviver, and always with a satisfactory result.

In the course of our day's experience, however, the case which occasioned Mr. Whimble most perturbation was that of a whole family, the domestic peace and prosperity of which had, as he averred, suffered complete wreck through an innocent babe some few months old; and who, from being the cherished cherub of the household, the delight of its fond parents, and an object of adoration to its brothers and sisters, had, under the hateful influence of the School Board, come to be regarded as a bogey and a bugbear. I have reasons for supposing that Mr. Whimble purposely made this his last call, because he felt that circumstances might arise out of it which would unman him, and make him unfit to perform any more duty that day.

'Unless matters have altered, sir,' said he to me, 'which I have very little hopes of, we shall find here an example which exactly illustrates the possible extent of the mischief that may crop out of this compulsory business. Of course, sir, the fact must not be forgotten that weak-minded as well as strong-minded persons—like Mrs. Walkinshaw, for instance—come within the scope of its

working. This of the Larrapers is a weak-minded case, I am afraid.'

'The Larrapers are old offenders, I suppose?'

'They—at least the father has been taken before the magistrate and fined on both occasions,' replied Mr. Whimble, as we paused at the dilapidated threshold of the Larraper dwelling. 'The husband I believe to be a not particularly nice kind of man; indeed, on one occasion not only did he abuse me, but threatened me with personal violence, and therefore I had much less compunction in summoning him. But there's his family, sir—quite a houseful, as one may say, of poor little creatures; and a baby in arms—a bright little chap, who knows me as well as possible, he has seen me so often. Well, sir, on both the occasions mentioned I paid the fine and costs privately out of my own pocket. I blame myself afterwards for these weaknesses, for really I cannot afford to do such things out of the very moderate salary I am allowed. Larraper, you must know, is a house-painter, and—Good gracious, this is he coming down the street! I was in hope that he would not be at home. However, I am determined to be severe with him this time.'

And as the defaulting house-painter—a dirty and dissipated individual, and evidently far gone in liquor—approached, the visitor assumed his most ferocious expression of countenance.

'Mr. Larraper,' began my friend sternly; but the intoxicated house-painter cut him short.

'Don't apologise, sir,' said he; 'it is your duty, and you must perform it. I've been expectin' it. It's a month hard labour, I s'pose. I'll—hic!—I'll do it, sir, like a man. And when the blessed Board has drove my wife into

the mad'us as well, I hope its revengeful nature will be satisfied. Don't stand on ceremony with me, Mr. Detective,' he continued, addressing himself to me, at the same time holding out his hands; ' slip on the handcuffs, if you've got 'em about you, and I'll go quiet.'

'Larraper!' remarked Mr. Visitor, 'you are drunk! Don't stand there talking like a fool, and wasting my valuable time. Let us see your wife.'

The street-door was opened, and the man, with difficulty leading the way by holding on to the banisters, showed us to a front room on the second floor. The place was almost bare of furniture, and occupied by a miserable-looking woman with a child at her breast and by four other little children. Mr. Visitor, instead of proceeding at once to the business that had brought him there, looked round the room with a dismay it was beyond his power to disguise, and presently exclaimed,

'Gracious me, why, where's the table that stood in the middle? where's the chimney-glass?'

The drunken painter, who had sunk down on to a chair, here rose to his feet.

'Where are they?' he cried huskily, at the same time pointing the finger of hatred towards the unconscious suckling in its mother's arms; 'ask that young devourer, ask that rapacious little house-leech' (horse-leech I think he must have meant), 'what has come of 'em!'

'Larraper has sold 'em for drink,' said the woman, with dull indifference.

'And who drove me to it?' exclaimed the brute; 'who brought the sorrier on me that I'm glad to drown at any price? Wasn't it the brat and the thundering School Board con-spiring together that

done it? Ain't it,' continued Mr. Larraper, taking a very dirty cotton handkerchief from his pocket and applying it to his eyes,—"ain't it enough to make a man go and shove his head in a pail when he finds his own offspring driving him to make a beast of himself!'

'But how can that poor baby drive you to anything of the kind?' I asked.

'How? He asks how, Martha!' returned Mr. Larraper, turning to his wife, and laughing a drunken laugh of derision. 'How? Why, wasn't it through that hateful little wretch—' ('O, don't, don't, Charley dear; anything but call it that, you that used to be so fond of it!' this from Mrs. Larraper, now in tears). 'I say and repeat, wasn't it through that hateful little wretch that you lost Mr. Solomons' westkit work? Wasn't it as good as nine shillings a week to us when you was allowed to keep our eldest gal at home to nuss her? and didn't Mr. Solomons himself, after three warnings, stop the work because of the many westkits you spite through being obliged to embroider 'em with that young cuss in your arms? Don't check me, Martha, in calling it so. Is it my fault that my nat'r' feelin's as a father are perverted and my 'art turned against my own flesh and blood? Where's the table that stood in the middle, indeed?' continued Mr. Larraper, with a threatening shake of his head; 'it will soon be where's the baby that was chuck'd out o' winder, if they go on goading me.'

At this dark threat, led by Mrs. Larraper, who hugged her baby so tightly that it squealed too, the whole family broke into loud lamentations, while poor soft-headed, kind-hearted Mr. Visitor was fain to hasten to and look out at the window to hide his emotion.

'But you always drank, you know, Mr. Larraper; you won't pretend to deny that,' he said at length.

'But never so hard till he had this preying on his mind,' exclaimed his wife; 'it's a awful law, gentlemen, that sets a father against his own child. How *can* he love it when—bless its poor little heart!—it is taking the bread out of our mouths! It's real hard that a dear baby should be turned into a millstone round our necks instead ofa comfort and a blessing.'

I am not sure that she designed it, but if she had she could not more successfully have hit Mr. Visitor on his tenderest point. He could stand it no longer, and after a hurried whisper with Mrs. Larraper, accompanied by a sound curiously like the chinking of silver, we took our departure.

I cannot say that I was at all favourably impressed with Mr. Whimple's fitness for his office; indeed, I have no hesitation in saying that the harvest of good the seeds of which the legislature are so indefatigably sowing would be lamentably retarded were all Board visitors like the chicken-hearted gentleman in question. But at the same time I am bound to acknowledge that my day's observations—apart from the Larrapers and the Walkinshaws—left me with the impression that 'the baby's' shoulders were scarcely broad enough for the burden it was fated to bear, and that it would be an excellent thing if some remedy could be devised for the manifest injustice it is at present enduring.

À LA WATTEAU.

THE pretty coquettish-looking brunette, who has dressed herself—or been arrayed by the artist—in the Watteau costume, we may suppose for some fancy-ball or seasonable festivity, may be left to make her own impress and win her full quiver of admirers. She is a very charming young lady, and needs no word of ours to herald her praises. Of the artist it will be enough to say that he has given us a very attractive drawing, *à la* Watteau, as its title intimates, but not a servile or even a very close imitation of the painter of Valenciennes. Rather it is, as imitations ought to be, a free adaptation of the quaint Louis XIV. style to contemporary tastes and modes of thought. Watteau's ladies are always and unmistakably French; Mr. Hennessey's damsel is as unmistakably English. Not alone are form and features English, but the costume plainly came from an English costumier. Still, both aspect and treatment are *à la* Watteau, and that suffices for our theme.

In these days of faded and feeble artistic inanities representative of social scenes and subjects, it is refreshing to see a young artist turn aside from the beaten paths to seek inspiration in fresh fields or the study of an almost forgotten 'old master.' Antoine Watteau's was once a name to conjure with, but for long has been almost ignored in the art-world. Yet, in looking at one and another recent soulless revival, we have wondered whether Watteau's turn would never come round. His would, we admit, be

a difficult style to resuscitate in its neatness, daintiness, and precision of handling, grace, vivacity, and piquancy of form and sentiment. But it is very much the mode now to paint scenes of social life, and is likely to become still more so; the festivities of the upper as well as the virtues of the middle and the griefs of the lower strata of society figure in every exhibition; and for the first, at least, no better model than Watteau could well be chosen. Stothard, in the last generation, kept Watteau in his mind when painting his scenes from the garden of Boccaccio, but he was of too serious a turn to succeed in imitating the brilliant Frenchman. His women were as graceful, but it was the grace of ancient Greece rather than of modern France or mediæval Italy, and he lacked altogether the gaiety and glitter of his model. His ladies and their gallants took their pleasures sadly.

Watteau was, in truth, one of those men of original genius who make the style by which they are known. Of Flemish origin, though born at Valenciennes, he grafted the French vivacity upon his native stock. Grave, reserved, and taciturn in manner, and subject to frequent fits of depression, his pencil was always employed on festive themes, when he had not to yield to the commands of his employers. The names of his early masters are given, but they are only names. From them he learned little more than the mechanism of his art. But that is all the true man needs. When he has learned that, he may be

trusted to acquire for himself all that lies beyond and is within his reach.

Like all ambitious Frenchmen Watteau's first thought, when he became his own master, was to proceed to Paris. Moneyless, he had to seek employment, and he found it at first with a picture manufacturer—for picture manufacturers were no more unknown then than now—who kept his journeymen occupied in producing imitations of the Old Masters or devotional pieces for village churches and private oratories, as one or the other were most in demand. As soon as he could, Watteau escaped from this drudgery, and for a while worked under Claude Gillot, who was engaged in painting scenery for the opera and designing costumes for the ballet. The ballet then was as unlike the ballet of the present day as was the scenery of the Comédie Italienne to the scenery of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. The ballet was an elegant pastoral, the scenery neat and elegant to match. It was in watching these graceful idylls of the theatre that Watteau, we need not doubt, insensibly acquired his taste for refined pastoral subjects and his style of representing them.

How long he continued in Gillot's *atelier* is uncertain. But whilst there he was preparing himself for original work. He loved, we are told, to stroll about the places of holiday resort, and sketch unobserved any persons or habits that caught his fancy. Especially he used to watch and sketch the mock doctors, who, dressed in fanciful robes and mounted on a platform, rehearsed with extravagant gestures and bombastic phrases the wonderful cures their pills or draughts had wrought. Itinerant musicians, mendicants, and market-folk, and

all sorts of unusual or picturesque characters, found a place in his note-book. It may be he was at this time contemplating the producing French counterparts to the Dutch and Flemish kermes, which the Ostades and Teniers had rendered so popular, or possibly he was only working in that vein of grotesque and caricature in which he about this time indulged, but which happily he soon cast aside. Some of his studies in the Grosvenor Gallery show that he did not confine his pencil to these subjects. Among them are drawings of a Savoyard boy, of a young man in festal costume holding across his shoulders a staff, around which vine-leaves are entwined, and of an old beggar-woman; but there are also careful studies of youthful female heads, and of ladies, seated and standing, in evening dress. They are made in red and black chalk, admirably drawn, and very delicately and carefully finished—studies in every sense of the word.

Some original efforts displeased M. Gillot, and Watteau had to leave his *atelier*. Not yet, however, was he strong enough or rich enough to stand alone, and he had to seek a new master. He found one in Claude Audran, to whom his talent for the grotesque made him a valuable assistant. Working in Audran's *atelier* would have helped Watteau little, but Audran was a man of attainments and ability, and, what was of more service to Watteau, he was court-painter and keeper of the Luxembourg, to which he gave his assistant free access.

This was the turning-point in Watteau's career. He saw something of court-life, and at the Luxembourg studied Rubens' wondrous series of Medici paintings, and found in them what seemed to him a revelation in composition



À LA WATTREAU.

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and colour. Henceforth Rubens was the teacher to whom he looked with unbounded reverence. Critics observing the wide difference, not only in the size, but in the subject, treatment, and general character of their works, have questioned, naturally enough, the statement that it was from Rubens that Watteau derived his style. But the statement is that of the earliest authorities; and though it is quite true that no direct imitation is traceable, any one familiar with the works of the two masters will understand how the younger may have ascribed his style to the inspiration of the elder—not by imitation, indeed, but by assimilation. Watteau had his own ideal of form, acquired long before he studied Rubens' pictures. He had, no doubt, also settled his method of painting. And drawing and handling are not often altogether changed by a painter who has reached years of maturity, however much he may, through some new influence, alter or modify his general style. But the influence of Rubens may be seen in Watteau's scheme of colour, in the broken folds and tints of his draperies, in the drawing, touch, and tone of his landscapes, and especially in the treatment of his foliage.

Familiarity with the works of the great masters in the royal collections set him longing—as what painter has not at some time longed?—to go to Italy. To this end he entered into the competition at the Academy. The subject of the prize was the meeting of David and Abigail, and Watteau's picture obtained only the second place. All hope of Italy vanished. Dispirited, he resolved to return to his birthplace. To obtain the necessary funds he painted a picture of 'Troops departing,' which he sold for some

fifty shillings, and set out for Valenciennes. But Valenciennes was very dull after Paris, and the purchaser of his picture was so delighted with it that he offered eight or ten pounds for a companion to it. Watteau, now six or eight-and-twenty, set to work vigorously. His festive scenes became exceedingly popular; he was admitted into the Academy, and sailed along on the full tide of prosperity.

But not, as would seem, of happiness. His restlessness and waywardness of disposition grew upon him; he alternately sought and shunned society, and depression of spirits became habitual. Observers called him morose, but the sinking of heart was due to physical causes. Consumption was slowly developing itself. When it became evident what was the disease, it had proceeded too far to be arrested. Our Richard Mead, physician to George I., then enjoyed the widest fame in such cases; and late in the autumn of 1720, Watteau came to London for the benefit of his advice. Mead was a great lover and collector of works of art as well as a skilful physician. He received the painter with open arms, insisted on his staying in his house, offered him commissions, and introduced him to the king and court. But the winter set in damp and cold, and the longing for Paris became irresistible. Thither he returned accordingly at the beginning of February 1721. Soon he desired a further change; and moving from place to place, he lingered till July, when he quietly passed away, having not yet completed his thirty-seventh year, and wanting those few months of the years to which Raffaello lived.

Looking to the circumstances of his life and his early death, we may rather wonder that he painted

so many pictures than that his pictures are so seldom seen. Considering his eminence—and from the first his countrymen have been unwavering in their admiration—it is remarkable that so few of his paintings are in the public collections. The Louvre, where we might have expected to find the best illustrations of his style, has only one picture by him, and that is little more than a sketch, and by no means characteristic of his manner. Our National Gallery has not a single example. In the Dulwich Gallery there are, however, two pictures by him, both *fêtes*, and one of them very fine. The private collections are richer in examples. Sir Richard Wallace has an exceedingly fine specimen; and there are, or were, some very good ones in Lord Overstone's, Mr. Morrison's, and several other collections. Nearly all of these are entitled 'Fêtes Champêtres,' but this is not their proper designation. Watteau's are scenes of high and mostly of court life. The *fêtes* are held by high-born lords and ladies in trim and stately gardens. There is nothing rustic about them. When Watteau was received into the Academy in 1717, he was entered on the register as

'Painter of Fêtes Galantes.' This is exactly what his *fêtes* are, and so they ought to be described.

Altogether there must be a good many of Watteau's pictures in England, but to the general public the painter is almost unknown except by reputation. Even at the exhibitions of the Old Masters at the Royal Academy it is some years since there has been a genuine Watteau shown. It would be a good deed if the Academy would secure a few authentic examples for their next Winter Exhibition. The opportunity of a leisurely study of his works would be of real benefit to the younger painters of social life. And the general public would find equal pleasure in the examination. For to the solidity of manner, both technical and mental, of the earlier Dutch and Flemish masters, Watteau added a richness and raciness of style, a freshness, gaiety, grace, and elegance altogether French—and it must be said altogether conventional—which in the *ensemble* is exceedingly piquant, *spirituel*, and charming. They have, too, an historic value. The 'joyous life' of the court and courtiers of Louis XIV. is nowhere else so happily shown.

CLUB CAMEOS.

The Guardsman.

It is my custom of an afternoon to enter the palatial halls of the Caravanserai, and to salt my buttered toast and drink my anteprandial cup of tea whilst poring over the evening editions of the newspapers. I must confess to being partial to that social but somewhat indigestible institution, five-o'clock tea, and dawdle over the mild refection with all the love and languor of those who sipped bohea in the days of good Queen Anne. As a rule, scarcely am I seated in my roomy arm-chair, with the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Globe*, and the *Evening Standard* clutched in my selfish grasp, than Dolly Clavering, unless his arduous military duties interfere with his movements, comes in and sits down beside me. He, too, is fond of tea, and his tastes are considerably encouraged in that direction by a bevy of as fair sisters as ever brother declined to escort shopping. Dolly and I are excellent friends—'pals' is the expression he uses; and he is good enough to say that 'he has a regard, don't you know, for the old sportsman,' alluding to myself; though why I am a 'sportsman,' unless that in Dolly's phraseology everybody is a *sportsman*, is beyond me. Some of Dolly's friends call me an 'old fogey,' and if I am not to be designated by my rightful name, of the two I prefer to be termed an 'old sportsman.' There is a savour of manliness in the one which is not objectionable, but of womanliness in the other which is hardly flattering.

Dolly is a mere lad of one-and-twenty; and his bright, fresh, youthful face, with its nascent

whiskers and moustache, the latter fondly caressed, the Clavering rather beaky nose, and his sisters' eyes, are as pleasant for a tired London man to look upon as are the snows of the Alps after the sands of the desert. A great buck is Dolly. His frock-coat fits his tall slender figure without a wrinkle; his trousers never break out into ugly folds at the knees; his boots are lacquered like polished ebony; his hat is new without being glossy; and there is a swagger, partly from diffidence, partly from hauteur, in his gait and greeting, which is seldom disagreeable in a very young man. Careful as is Dolly with respect to his attire, you could never mistake him for a dressy stockbroker or City swell; everything about him is quiet, sober, and unpretentious. Apart from liking young Clavering, and knowing something of his people, I regard Dolly with a peculiar and special interest. He is a Guardsman, and has the honour to hold a commission in that favourite regiment the Bombardiers. More than once have I solaced his solitude, when on guard at the Bank, by being his guest; nor is my presence entirely unknown at the hospitable dining-table at St. James's Palace or at the mess at the Tower. Again let me say that Dolly is in the Guards.

I repeat the statement, for it appears to me that some curious delusions exist in the public mind as to the Guardsman of the period. He is the prize favourite of the novelists, and it must be confessed that *messieurs les romanciers* make him out to be a most won-

derful personage. Only last night I read *Bearskin and Boudoir* by that favourite author of military fiction the fashionable Browne—Browne, if you please, with the final e. All the heroes of Browne's works are soldiers, and it is needless for me to add, when a man boasts of an aristocratic e to a plebeian cognomen, that all his soldiers are Guardsmen, officers either in the Household Cavalry or in the Foot Guards. When I read of the doughty deeds of Damer de Bohun Cholmondeley Fitzhardinge (Browne likes a good name for his hero), and think of Dolly, who is rather shy in ladies' society, and who prefers to go through a gate than over one when out with the hounds, the contrast is amusing.

Of course you know this Fitzhardinge! What reader of fiction (and I own to being a most omnivorous novel-reader myself) is not acquainted with him? Are we not all familiar with his haughty commanding figure, his perfect features, those dark terrible eyes always being lit up with desire or revenge, or else hard and cold as sheeted steel, the heavy moustache falling over the stern cruel mouth, the exquisitely modelled hands white as a beauty's, the arched instep, and the Arabian feet? And then the views of this splendid creature upon modern society! How fierce is the cynicism underlying all his opinions and judgments! When I listen to Browne's heroes inveighing against the falsity of woman, and dealing out mordant strokes against the shams and hypocrisies of life in the club smoking-room, or in the *tabagie* of one of those ancient country mansions for which the pen of our author is noted, I compare him with Dolly, who can be seen any Sunday morning during the season with his mother and

sisters in the family-pew at St. Peter's, Eaton-square, who is passionately fond of dancing, who is devoted to amateur theatricals, who loses what he is pleased to call his heart about half a dozen times a week, and who colours furiously when a woman snubs him (which is not often, for he is too shy and too much of a gentleman to be forward); and the contrast is striking.

What an ordinary man is Dolly Clavering, and what a brilliant creature is our Fitzhardinge! When Dolly goes to ball or dance he is quite in a flutter of excitement if a reigning beauty will allow him to write his name down on her card, or if some high dame of fashion asks for his escort to Hurlingham or the Orleans Club. Whereas Fitzhardinge creates such havoc amid the duchesses and countesses, scattered liberally throughout Browne's volumes, as to exhibit a most lamentable state of things in the English peerage. Haughty ladies, whose blood is so blue that it is surprising it condescends to flow at all, sigh for him; the greatest heiresses languish after his smiles; disappointment, rejection, refusal, are words never to be met with in his social dictionary. Dolly is not a bad man across country when his blood is up; but, as I have said, he regards jumping, unless when necessary, as a work of supererogation; he is a fair shot, and can knock over his pigeons at Hurlingham or the Gun Club as well as the generality of his fellows; nor is his performance despicable in the stubble and turnip-fields, or in the coverts of the paternal woods. But Fitzhardinges! He rides horses that none but he can ride; he never hunts but he is glued to the hounds from find to finish; whilst the gates, fences, brooks, doubles, and every mortal

thing he takes with such consummate ease, always make the whole field tremble with fear. He eschews—dauntless and magnificent creature that he is!—ordinary sport—partridges, pheasants, grouse, and the like—and is only keen after big game. The tigers he shoots on foot; the wild buffaloes his unerring aim brings down; the lions, leopards, pumas, in fact, that fall to his wonderful breech-loader, are they not written in the pages of the veracious Browne?

Unless when Dolly is on guard or engaged by society, he dines modestly at his club for some four or five shillings; then, while digestion is pleasantly waiting upon appetite, he pays a visit to the smoking-room and falls asleep over a novel; perhaps, when slumber has refreshed him, he goes upstairs and takes a hand at whist, playing the club points till it is time for him to go to his bachelor lodgings in Jermyn-street and turn into bed. We know how Fitzhardinge, on the contrary, passes *his* time. What princely dinners he orders! what an educated *gourmet* he is! How deep are his potations, without ever affecting the clearness of his brain, the steadiness of his hand, or the basilisk coldness of his extraordinary eyes! How he gambles at *écarté*, napoleon, or baccarat, winning or losing thousands without ruffling the composure of that sphinx-like face or disturbing the serenity of that marble brow! How he has to listen from charming female lips of the misery his coldness, his indifference, or his neglect has caused in their too susceptible hearts! When I read of Fitzhardinge—of his prowess, his Rochefoucauld maxims, his pampered tastes, his gorgeous attire, his innumerable conquests, and his Munchausen sporting adven-

tures—it is a source of congratulation to me that I have never had the pleasure of seeing him amongst his comrades in the Household troops; for with all due deference to Browne, it seems to me that Fitzhardinge is a hard vicious brute, and far more like a flash groom who has been educated in the music-halls of the period, than one of those we are accustomed to look upon as 'an officer and a gentleman.' If certain of our novelists hold the mirror up to Nature, well may society talk about the degeneracy of the British army. For my part, I do not believe in the accuracy of these descriptions—of what use is imagination unless you draw upon it?—and in refutation of such views and theories let me sketch the career of Dolly Clavering.

The eldest son of an old Devonshire squire and heir to some six thousand a year, Dolly, after a brief education at Eton, where he distinguished himself as one of the smartest 'fields' in the eleven, was gazetted to the Bombardiers. In these days of equality and open competition many of the privileges of the Guards have been docked; still a commission in one of the regiments in the Household troops will always be an object of envy to most young men. Quartered in London, save when at Windsor or Shorncliffe, the Guardsman has every advantage that town life can offer, and can enjoy to the full all the charms and fascinations of good society. Unlike his less fortunate brother in the Line, he knows nothing of dull provincial towns, with their barrack monotony, garrison hacks, fifth-rate theatres, and indifferent amusements. He is exempt from foreign service; but in the hour of danger, and when the conflict is deepening around him, it is his

special privilege to be in the front of battle. The uniform he wears is in my opinion the most becoming in the service. There are ladies who so admire the gauntlets, helmets, and cuirasses of the Life Guards and the Blues, and the gorgeous blue-and-gold of the Horse Artillery, that they vow no dress in the British army equals them. But with all due deference to the opinion of the fairsæx—and in matters of costume their judgment is not to be decried—when Dolly is adorned in his bearskin and well-fitting scarlet tunic, no soldier, it seems to me, can wear a more becoming uniform, or one which more unites grace with quiet splendour.

If we are to credit our novelists, the young Guardsman is always the handsomest of his sex, enjoys a most lavish allowance, dwells in sumptuous chambers in St. James's-street, runs through a couple of fortunes before he has been five years on the town, disappoints his tradesmen, and then retires to some West India regiment or takes service under a half-savage potentate till the friendly heiress, who seems ever to be hovering over the colours of 'the Household,' takes pity upon him, and makes him once more a man and a millionaire. Dolly is certainly very good-looking, but for that advantage he is more indebted to his father and mother than to the Guards. The old Squire gives his son a decent allowance, which enables him to pay his wine-merchant and his tailor, to keep a horse which he both rides and drives, and to have comfortable rooms on the second floor of a house in Jermyn-street. The paternal mansion is in Prince's-gardens, but Dolly thinks it incumbent upon himself to live in apartments near his two clubs. He is known as a good son and a

kind brother, and his people have little cause to complain of his desertion. Whenever he wants a dinner he has only to let his mother know that he will make one of the family party at eight o'clock for the cook to show all her cunning and the Squire to have up some of that 'Mouton' claret which has moistened the throats of the Claverings for well-nigh a generation. Having four charming sisters we need hardly say that Dolly finds no difficulty in obtaining the company of one or two men in his regiment on these occasions.

I have said that my young friend's allowance is good, but it is not exorbitant. Dolly has, however, one pull over his brother linesman—he is saved from many of the expenses which ordinarily attend an officer's life. Except when at the Tower or at Windsor or Shorncliffe he has no mess-bills to pay, nor is he called upon for incessant contributions; hence his income goes farther than it otherwise might. If Dolly draws five hundred a year from the kindly old man he calls 'the governor,' it is about as much as he does; and if a man does not gamble and is not the slave of any vicious tastes, five hundred a year when *spent rigidly upon oneself* will cover a fair expenditure. At all events Dolly does not live uncomfortably, he never seems to lack funds to dine his friends at the Caravanserai, to run over to Paris, to put in an appearance on first nights at the theatres, or to indulge in the various other forms of social distraction which require ready money. Nor should he; for *I, moi qui parle*, had a relative—the clock he took from the Frenchman at Waterloo ticks before me as I write—who managed to live in the Guards on three hundred a year until he succeeded to his

property; but, as Dolly reminds me, that was many years ago, and money went further then than it does in these days of high wages, continual strikes, and rabid competition. From what I hear I fancy, however, that the old Squire helps Dolly to settle his accounts with histailor and livery-stable keeper.

In reading novels one is always struck with the idleness of the Guardsman: he is making his hands white; he is adorning his outward man; he is flirting, lounging, eating, dancing, riding, driving, shooting, yachting, hunting, but never working. Far be it from me to say that Dolly's is an industrious or arduous life, yet it is not one that is 'all beer and skittles.' What with attending commanding officer's or adjutant's parade during drill season, and going on guard as a rule about every second day, he is not the complete idler and 'chalk soldier' many suppose. When on duty at St. James's or Buckingham Palace, or at the Tilt-yard, a grateful nation entertains him at St. James's Palace at a dinner, which costs the country some three thousand a year. At this dinner there are the three officers on guard at St. James's and Buckingham Palace, the two officers on guard at the Tilt-yard, three officers of the Life Guards, and the guests of the evening. At the Tower he has a regular mess; but when it is his lot to march his men down to Threadneedle-street for the protection of that treasury of the nation, the Bank of England, the directors of that distinguished company furnish him with a neat little dinner, and even extend their hospitality to a couple of his friends when required. Occasionally Dolly asks me to be his guest, and, indolent youngster that he is,

instead of marching his men along the Strand, Fleet-street, and Cheapside, he limits his pedestrianism to walking the soldiers to St. James's Park station, and conveying them to their destination by the agreeable process of travelling by the Underground Railway, the fares of course being defrayed out of Dolly's pocket. No wonder that the men have no objection to Mr. Clavering being on Bank guard!

When I dine in Threadneedle-street with Dolly, and look at my cheery host—the 'war-paint' discarded, and his manly chest incased in an easy shooting-coat—I cannot but think how many young men have sat in that Bank parlour with life and hope before them, and how various have been their careers! There was Jones, happiest and most amusing of private actors; he was shot down on that pitiless hillside of the Alma. Brown, after a brief career, and a decided refusal from his father to pay his bills, became bankrupt, and is now a partner in a respectable wine-merchant's office in the east of England. Smith, the dullest soldier who ever cried out 'form fours' or 'shoulder arms,' is now a great military authority, and one of the shining lights in the House of Commons. Robbynson has exchanged arms for the toga, and is now Secretary of Legation somewhere across the Atlantic. Snooks, a feather-weight and the buck of his regiment in his time, is now sixteen stone, dresses like a farmer, and is great at agricultural dinners, ploughing matches, and in breeding stock. What a funny world it is! Those whom we thought fools are now the wise of the earth, the failures are brilliant successes, the poor have become rich, and those from whom we expected such great things

have turned out the most commonplace of mediocrities. True it is that nothing is certain but the unforeseen, and that he is a sage man who can predict the future of his friends.

Still, in spite of this remark, I will take upon myself to cast the future of my friend, young Clavering. Unless the old Squire shall have been summoned by *pallida mors* to take his place in the vault of his ancestors beneath the aisle of the parish church at Trevennis, Dolly will remain in the Bombardiers till he obtains his company. For the next few years he will enjoy to the full, in all sobriety, I hope, the pleasures of the town. With all the buoyancy of youth he will let the future take care of itself, and bask in the sunshine of that present which seems eternal to one-and-twenty.

'Quid sit futurum cras, fuge querere ; et
Quem sors dierum canque dabit, lucro
Appone ; nec dulces amores
Sperne puer ; neque tu choreas,
Donec virenti canities abest
Morosa.'

Then perhaps by his sixth or seventh season he will begin to find that there is, after all, a certain amount of monotony in the distractions of society ; that dinners and dances are a bore ; that the gossip of the club is dull ; and that it is possible to have too much of polo, pigeon-shooting, cricket, lawn-tennis, and incessant excitement. In other words, his watchful mother and affectionate sisters will pass in review all the nice eligible girls they know of ; a selection will be made ; they will be trotted out for Dolly's inspection ; the object of his preference will be made to frequently cross his path in town ; she will be asked down to Trevennis in the autumn ; a fond companionship will be struck up between her and Dolly's sisters ; and one fine morning Adolphus Frederick Clav-

vering, captain (but, alas for the days of privilege, no longer captain *and* lieutenant-colonel !) in the Bombardier Guards, will find himself standing at the altar-rails, ready to be offered as a victim to matrimony. As a married man and heir to a goodish property he will abandon soldiering, and betake himself to civil pursuits. By this time it is not improbable that the old Squire will be feeing Charon to ferry him over the Styx, and Dolly will succeed to the paternal fortune and honours. He will not be lavish or ostentatious, for his fortune will not permit of extravagance ; yet his house will be by no means closed to the country around, or to his various London friends. He will be put into the commission of the peace, and when he goes to Court he will wear the scarlet uniform of a deputy-lieutenant. He will hunt a good deal, till he gets fat and his nervous system begins to break down. He will be always fond of shooting, for sight generally lasts longer than nervea. He will be a good landlord, and interest himself moderately in agricultural matters. If he has a few hundreds to throw away, and wants occupation, he may amuse himself by farming the home-farm on his own account. His wife and children will look after the poor. He will be on good terms with his vicar, and make a point of putting in an appearance in the square curtained pew of the parish church every Sunday morning. He will come up to town for three months in the year, and as he gets older abuse the change from the country to London. In short, he will be a model country gentleman, and he will be none the less popular in his county, and none the worse husband and father, because he is a man of the world, and in his youth was a Guardsman.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER V.

THERE ARE HAPPY MOMENTS IN LIFE !

I AGAIN crept through the entrance passage, and once outside I took up my station at a little distance from the opening of the mole cricket's grotto, on a clod of earth brightened by a warm sunbeam, which shone through the strawberry-leaves. I half unclosed my elytrae or wing-covers, and basked for a few minutes in the soft warm air of the kind of arbour formed by the plants above me. I then attended to my toilette. It is an hereditary peculiarity amongst us to be careful of our persons. We love cleanliness, we are sensitive to pleasant scents, and we abhor bad smells. The insult offered to me the evening before by the handsome carabus had therefore affected me most painfully. I thought of it again

as I was cleaning my claws, and my veins swelled with fresh indignation. But I soon dispelled these disagreeable reflections; and with a view to calling up others more in harmony with the beauty of the scene in which I found myself, I struck up one of my most joyful songs.

I was in good spirits, and I sang for a long time. Now and then, however, I paused to listen for an answering voice; but it was evident that no creature of my own species lived in these parts, for not a sound betrayed the presence of another cricket. This silence struck me as strange, for I was not accustomed to it. Still I must own I rather liked it than otherwise, on account, probably, of the enmity shown to me by my

brothers, which had resulted in destroying the charm that their voices would have had for me if they had been friendly.

Time flew fast; but I was so glad to be safe, and free from anxiety, that I could not bring myself to close the solo-concert to which I was treating myself. The sound of my own voice elated me, and presently, carried away by a kind of joyful intoxication, I found myself jumping about and gesticulating like a mad creature.

'Ab, well,' I said to myself, 'one can do as one likes when one is alone.'

I had fancied myself in solitude, but I had a witness. In the very height of my excitement I suddenly met the eyes of a grasshopper, perched motionless upon a leaf beside me, and looking at me with an expression of surprised amusement. How did she get there without my seeing her? How long had she been there? It was impossible for me to tell. On catching sight of her my ardour was suddenly damped, and I stood still as if petrified, in the most ridiculous attitude possible, with three legs on the ground and the others in the air. At the same moment the conviction that I cut a very ridiculous figure shot across my mind, and my first impulse was to dart down my cousin's passage. My agitation prevented my seeing the entrance immediately, and one brief moment of hesitation sufficed to make me change my mind, and saved me from crowning my vagaries by what would have been a piece of sheer folly.

I stole another glance at the grasshopper, and saw that she was a beautiful young creature of a green colour, and with a fine figure. She remained motionless, and kept her eyes fixed on me with what seemed to me a most ironical expression. It became imperative to

do something to alter the situation, and I could think of nothing better than to burst out laughing. The grasshopper smiled; and then, infected by the contagion of my example, frankly joined in my merriment. I was saved!

'This fortunate meeting delights me, charming grasshopper,' I began. 'I thought I was quite alone, and I am more than glad to be able to pay my respects to one so worthy of every attention.'

'Are you really so very delighted, friend cricket?' was the reply. 'It strikes me that my appearance just now—well, surprised you a little, if it did not annoy you.'

'I was surprised, I own. Have you only just come?'

'I was going by, when curiosity made me stop a minute. You seem in very good spirits.'

'O, we all try to shake off our depression sometimes. I really am the most unfortunate of crickets.'

'I could never have believed it.'

'It's true, for all that.'

'You have rather an original way of giving vent to your trouble.'

'I was indulging in all those vagaries just now merely to try and divert my thoughts. I am a miserable exile.'

'An exile!'

'Yes, an exile. I was born far from here. But the victim of the unjust hatred of my family, I had to leave my home and the lovely scenes of my childhood to escape from the iniquitous plots which daily placed my life in danger.'

'Poor cricket!'

'Arrived in this neighbourhood, after going through the most terrible dangers, a lucky accident led to my meeting a female relation, who accorded me the kindest hospitality.'

'Who is she?'

'An elderly mole cricket. There is the entrance to her house.'

'I know her; she is a good creature.'

'Very good; a little peculiar though.'

'So she is.'

'You know her, you say?'

'O, only slightly. She is a great stay-at-home; but I have heard of her.'

'You belong to these parts, then? You have relations and friends here?'



'I was born in this strawberry-bed, and I have never left it.'

We chatted on in this style about different things for more than an hour. The grasshopper delighted me, and I thoroughly enjoyed her conversation.

'This is a charming neighbourhood,' I said at last. 'I think I shall settle here. You walk this side sometimes, I suppose?'

'Sometimes. I go just where the humour takes me.'

'Sweet grasshopper, how glad

I am to have met you ! You seem to sympathise with my misfortunes. I can hear it in the very tones of your voice, and in listening to you I forget all my past troubles.'

'Good-bye, dear cricket. I can't stop any longer.'

'What ! you are going already ?'

'I must.'

'Shall I see you again ?'

'Perhaps.'

As she spoke she made me a graceful gesture of farewell, and with one bound sprang away. For a moment I saw her noiselessly poising herself on her light-green wings, and then she disappeared in the distance.

I remained for a few minutes in deep thought, gazing in the direction the grasshopper had taken. The day was already drawing to its close, and my astonishment was great at noticing that the sun was beginning to set. How very quickly the time had passed, to be sure ! I was very hungry, which was not much to be wondered at, for I had eaten nothing since the morning.

The lateness of the hour and my appetite alike warned me that it was time to rejoin my companions. I was not at all afraid of not finding enough to eat, for what the mole cricket had said in the morning about her numerous meals made me feel sure that her table would be well spread.

I was right. On going into the dining-room, I saw my cousin at her twelfth or fifteenth repast of cockchafer grubs, whilst Firefly, apparently sound asleep, lay on a ledge on one of the walls of the grotto. He had, however, had the consideration to leave his lamp burning. The spider, still wrapped in her lethargic torpor, had not made the slightest movement, and was dimly visible, lying on her side, and with outstretched limbs,

in the corner to which I had dragged her the night before.

'Where do you come from ?' the mole cricket asked me, between two mouthfuls. 'We haven't seen you all day ; your walk has been a long one.'

'No, it hasn't,' I replied ; 'I did not go far from your house. The blue sky, the brilliant sunshine, and the heat were so delightful that I spent the whole day enjoying them. Your home is very pleasantly situated.'

'Truth to tell, I don't care much personally for its advantages ; but I am duly and fully sensible of them, because it is to them that I owe my abundant and varied diet, a privilege I value above any other.'

'Well, that is at least a candid confession.'

'It surprises you. Ah, friend, you are still young ! When you come to my age you'll change your mind on that point. Your poetry will be gradually transformed to prose, and you won't despise the pleasures of the table so much. Every age has its fancies.'

'How old are you, then ?'

'What a very indiscreet remark ! Whoever heard of such a question being put to a person of my sex ! I am as old as I look ; so now you know.'

'I beg pardon, dear cousin,' I replied, laughing. 'I hadn't the slightest intention of being rude. You told me yesterday you were old enough to be my mother, and I thought—'

'I told you that, did I ? Well, perhaps I did, and you must be content with that vague assertion. One's age is a point on which one is willing that there should be some little uncertainty.'

'Has anything new occurred during my absence ?'

'Nothing. Firefly has been sleeping the calm and peaceful

sleep of a virtuous insect with a well-filled stomach and an easy conscience, and the spider is still sleeping off the effects of the poison.'

'Do you think she will remain in that state much longer?'

'I neither know nor care. But come; eat this balaninus grub. Its larva lives in nuts, and has a very delicate flavour.'

'It really is delicious. Do you find many of them?'

'There is a nut-tree not far from here, and at this time of year the larva of the balanini or nut-weevils leave their nuts through holes nibbled by themselves, and bury themselves in the ground to undergo their transformation.'

'You certainly have an advantage over me in being able to burrow in the ground after your food. We other crickets have to content ourselves with what passes the doors of our homes.'



'But you can burrow in the ground.'

'Yes; but only to make holes to live in.'

'What do you feed upon?'

'On flies, wood-lice, and ants.'

'Pooh! Ants have a horrid acid taste.'

'O, you get used to that. We eat blades of grass too.'

'Miserable diet! Live with me; you shall have a good meal for nothing every day.'

'You are very kind, dear cousin, and I would gladly accept your invitation; but there is one obstacle.'

'And what is that?'

'Your house seems very dark

to me. We shall not always have Firefly's lamp to light us, and besides, I love the sun and its warm beams.'

'And soft breezes and the scent of flowers, and fine scenery and vegetation, and all the rest of it. I understand. Well, settle near here; there's nothing to prevent your scooping out a home to suit you.'

'I had already thought of it.'

'Very well; then you've only to do it.'

I did not think it necessary to mention my meeting with the grasshopper to my cousin, for of course she would have been sure to attribute to it my sudden deter-

mination to take up my residence near her.

'Well, cousin,' she went on, 'have you had enough? You have. Then go to bed now, and good-night to you, unless you would like to go and dream a little by moonlight.'

'No, I am going to sleep. You think there is no danger from moles to-night?'

'There don't seem to have been any in the neighbourhood to-day; but in any case you may rely on my vigilance. I will wake you at the very slightest alarm.'

The night did not pass over so peacefully as its predecessor. In fact, about the middle—at least when I had been, as it seemed to me, asleep a long time—the sound of voices woke me. I listened. Apparently a dispute was going on, in one of the passages of the house, between my cousin, whose voice I recognised at once, and some one whose harsh tones, betraying violent anger, were not altogether unfamiliar to me. I held myself in readiness to fly to the succour of my relative on the first appeal; reflecting, however, that if she had to defend herself in the narrow passage which was the scene of the quarrel, my help would not be of much avail, except to intimidate her adversary by the arrival of unexpected succour. But my intervention was not called for. The voices died away, leading me to conclude that the enemy had beaten a retreat, and then all again became quiet. Firefly slept on all the time, and heard nothing.

The next morning we learnt that my cousin, who sleeps very lightly, had been awakened, towards three in the morning, by a slight noise, a kind of rustling in the entrance passage; that this noise seemed gradually to approach; that she went to see what it was, and found herself face to face with

a beetle, who for some reason unknown was trying to get into the house; that she inquired the reason of this untimely intrusion, and was answered in a haughty fashion—so insolent is the whole race of beetles; and that the enemy finally beat a retreat, swearing and threatening.

'I have already had similar visitations,' added the mole cricket, 'and am so used to them, that I don't trouble my head about them. Beetles and other predatory insects sometimes come in here and steal my larvæ, and I just lay in a fresh store; but this time your presence here, friend Firefly, compelled me to preserve my home inviolate. That thief might have carried you off under our very noses.'

Firefly expressed her gratitude in glowing terms, and I joined him in congratulating our worthy hostess on her vigilance and courage.

'O, don't pay me so many compliments, friends; they are really quite uncalled for. I'm not a bit afraid of beetles; they have always run away from me.'

'But didn't the last one squirt some nasty liquid over you?'

'No; he couldn't turn round in my passage, and he had to beat a retreat backwards.'

The day passed as the previous one had done. The weather continued fine, and I remained until the evening making music on the little hillock, where I had already spent such pleasant-hours. To my great regret the grasshopper did not put in an appearance. Had she been prevented from coming? Had she forgotten me? Grasshoppers are always so giddy. This one, though, had seemed more serious than is usual with her race. She had shown sympathy for me, and the way in which we had parted encouraged me to hope. But I must not think of her any more; it was

too late for her to come to-day, so I returned indoors.

A change had taken place there. The spider had at last awoke from her torpor, and was talking to the glowworm. The remains of food lay beside her. I was told that as she came to, she had cried out that she was hungry, and that the mole cricket had generously given her two or three little larvæ of coleoptera, which she had eaten in default of flies.

She came up to me and thanked me for interfering on her behalf at a moment when her life had hung on a thread, which proved to me that she had heard our conversation. All this time the mole cricket was bustling about as if she had something else to think of. It was evident she felt slightly embarrassed.

We did not talk that evening. As soon as supper was over, we all went to sleep in our own' corners. The spider placed herself close to me, Firefly stretched himself on his usual projection, and the mole cricket reposed near the entrance passage.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRAP.

I WAS sleeping soundly, when a rough shake woke me with a start.

'Be quick!' cried the mole cricket. 'Here is the mole! *Saure qui peut!*'

At this ominous cry I started to my feet, and rushed into the nearest passage. At the same instant I felt something catch hold of me; but it was not the time to pause to see what it was. The passage I had chosen did not seem to be the one of egress; in my agitation I had taken the first which came—the one close to my sleeping-place. No, it was evidently not the way out; and if

not, it was unknown to me. Where did it lead? I should lose myself in this subterranean labyrinth and in the profound darkness. Anyhow the first thing to be done was to escape as quickly as possible, and I rushed on at a frantic pace. 'Bother! what is that clinging to my tail? Ah!'

This cry was wrung from me by terror. The earth suddenly gave way beneath my feet, and, for what seemed to me a long time, I felt myself falling through space.

A rough shock stopped me. I was at the bottom of a vast pit. Fortunately I was not hurt, though I had fallen head foremost. But where was I? I felt the ground about me. It was smooth and very hard; it was not soil. The sense of touch was all I had to guide me, for the darkness was complete. I advanced slowly, groping my way with outstretched antennæ, till I came to the foot of a perpendicular wall. This wall was perfectly even, as smooth as the floor. I paced slowly along it, feeling my way before me for fear of another tumble.

On, on I walked for a long, long time, and still under my feet I felt the same smooth hard ground, and on my left the same perpendicular wall as smooth as the ground.

Where could I be? I had not a notion. What was this subterranean channel? Where did it lead? Where did it end? I must be a long distance from my starting-point. One thing was certain: I was not sinking into the depths of the earth, for I was walking on firm ground. Presently I thought I made out a star. Ah, yea, there was another up there! I should most decidedly wait here till the morning. If stars were to be seen, of course there must be an opening in the

ceiling, and I should be able to see more clearly when the sun rose. I must stop walking, and wait.

But what had become of the object which had clung to me, and which I had carried with me in my flight? I no longer felt it. It had probably let go when I fell, and remained up above.

The day was long in coming, and I went on thinking, not to any very practical purpose though;

for the more I thought, the more incomprehensible appeared the strange adventure which had befallen me. My poor companions! What had become of them? The mole cricket would have escaped by one of her passages—she was used to such sudden alarms; but the spider and Firefly—they could not run so fast. The spider! The life we had saved had profited her little. And the glowworm! He would have been sure to lose his



presence of mind; very likely he forgot to put out his lamp, and was the first to fall a victim to the mole. I was musing thus when a voice close to my ear made me start.

‘Cricket! some one whispered very softly.

‘Ah! What? Who is there?’

‘It is I, the spider; your companion in the mole cricket’s grotto.’

‘You! Impossible!’

‘Hush! Speak lower; perhaps the mole is not far off.’

‘The mole! Why, we must be ever so far from him! How did you manage to follow me here?’

‘I have not moved since our fall.’

‘Nonsense! I have been walking for more than an hour.’

‘Yes; I have heard you. You have been walking, but without making much progress.’

‘What do you mean?’

‘You were going round and round.’

These words were a revelation. We were at the bottom of a circular pit. That accounted for my always feeling a wall on my left; yes, that was it! I had been going round and round. Why did not the idea occur to me before?

‘Wretched spider!’ I exclaimed angrily; ‘you heard me going round you for an hour, and never said a word!’

'How could I know what you were driving at? Our fall made me rather giddy, and I was weak, too, after my long fast; so when I came to my senses, and heard you running round and round me

without speaking, I thought the fright, the excitement—well, had upset you a little. You won't be hurt at the idea which occurred to me?'

'What idea?'



'Well, I thought you had become—'

'Mad?'

'Yes, that's it.'

'Ha, ha, ha!'

'Hush! don't laugh so loud.'

'Well, my long tramp might easily make you think me demented.'

'And I did not feel altogether comfortable—quite alone with a madman! So I just spun a thread up to the ceiling, and swung myself out of your reach. When you stopped walking, I thought you were probably calmer, and I spoke to you.'

'Do you know where we are?'

'Of course I do. We are at the bottom of an earthenware pot set by the gardener to catch the mole cricket. Don't you remember what she told us?'

'O yes, I know. Why ever didn't I think of that before?'

'You were too much excited. Whilst you were running about, I was reflecting. We are taken in the trap laid for your cousin, friend cricket.'

'Then we are lost.'

'That does not follow.'

'You have hopes of our escape?'

'Yes, I have—unless the mole comes upon us in his burrowing; there's some fear of that.'

'Heaven forefend! But, by the way, just tell me how you came to the bottom of the pot with me. I suppose you followed me closely?'

'Very closely indeed. Not trusting to the speed of my own legs when the mole cricket gave the alarm, I clung to one of the ends of your tail,* and you carried me off with you.'

'Ah, it was you I had in tow! I really might have guessed it; but in my confusion—What a pity the same happy thought did not occur to poor Firefly! He might have clung to me too.'

'I thought of it for him.'

'What do you mean?'

'At the cry of "Sauve qui peut!" I rushed to Firefly, caught him up between my legs, told him to put out his lamp at once, and then I flung myself upon your tail, clutching at it with my mandibles just as you plunged into the passage.'

'He slipped away from you, then, in our flight?'

'Not a bit of it. He is with us

* When the wings of a cricket are folded, they form what looks like a double tapering tail.—TRANS.

now. In our fall I instinctively loosened my grasp of him, just at the very moment when we were flung into space by the rebounding of your tail from against the end of the passage. We both struck against the ceiling, and I fell down from it again; but he was probably caught by something. There he is above us. Do you see him?'

'O, is that Firefly? Why, I took him for a star just now! I was certainly out of my mind.'

'Yes, that is he. He has only half extinguished his lamp.'

'Why does he remain there without moving or speaking? Hi, Firefly!'

'Hush! Don't shout at him like that; I think he is faint. When he woke just now to find himself in my grasp, he was probably in the dark as to my intentions, and very likely thought his last hour was come. That would account for his present state of torpor.'

'We must go to his assistance. But how can we get up there?'

'I am going there now.'

I guessed that the spider meant to spin a thread from the floor to the ceiling, and that she would thus be able to fetch down the glowworm.

As she was going up, I confided to her what my cousin had told me about Firefly's sex, begging her to respect his *incognito*, which she promised to do.

Presently a slight trembling of the luminous point I had taken for a star showed me that the attempt had been successful. The luminous point came down; and when it was near the ground, the faint light it gave enabled me to make out my old companion huddled together between the legs of the spider, who, heavily laden as she was, came down very slowly. Arrived at the bottom of the

pot, she laid down her burden, and began to rub it, urging me to do the same.

Firefly had really lost consciousness, but, thanks to our energetic friction, he soon came to himself; and his first words, after an astonished glance round him, were a stammering inquiry as to where he was, what had happened, and what had become of the mole cricket. He remem-

bered nothing; everything which had happened since our sudden retreat from the dining-room had escaped him. And it was not much wonder that, roughly seized as he had been by the spider, the stupor of fear should have immediately succeeded that of sleep, reducing him to the state of unconsciousness from which we had just aroused him.

We told him all that had hap-



pened; and when he learnt how much he owed to the spider, whose presence of mind, when the rest of us were beside ourselves with terror, had saved his life, he expressed his gratitude to his preserver in the warmest terms. He thanked me too, though I assured him with a smile that I had been but an unconscious agent in his rescue.

'Now that you have come to yourself, friend Firefly,' said the spider, 'you may as well give us

a little more light from your lamp, for we can hardly see a bit. That's the next thing to be done; for then we shall know better where we are, and can consult as to the best means of getting away.'

Firefly hastened to comply with this request, and we were soon able to examine the place to which the accident of our flight had brought us.

The spider had guessed rightly. We were at the bottom of a large

earthenware pot, such as is used for the cultivation of flowers. The roof of our prison was formed by a clod of soil, kept in its place by some bits of stick, between which hung the roots of grass. It was on one of these sticks that the glowworm had fallen and remained. At the upper edge of the pot we could see a round opening, which we knew to be the entrance to the mole cricket's gallery. Opposite a similar opening represented the continuation of the same gallery, which was broken by the hollow formed by the pot.

The trap was cleverly set, as proved by our having been caught in it.

By which of the two openings I had arrived, I should have been at a loss to say, for I was quite

thrown out of my bearings in this circular pit.

'You came through that one,' said the spider, guessing my thoughts from the way I was looking about me.

'How can you tell?'

'Easily enough. The direction of my thread shows you where Firefly was when I fetched him, above that cross-road which juts out. Well, he could only have been flung there from the point opposite to us. If he had come from the other, he must have alighted on the opposite side of the same passage.'

'True, true.'

I admired the sagacity of our companion, and from that moment I felt confidence in her power to extricate us from our awkward situation.

(*To be continued.*)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER IV. THE REALM OF THE SÄNTIS.

'O Säntis! thou dost rightly wear the crown,
For seven princes stand about thy throne,
And boundless is that merry realm of thine.
E'en Tyrol flashes icy greeting back,
In token of allegiance. Yea, what court
Can bear the least comparison with thine,
My proud and hoary monarch of the Alps!'
A. v. DROSTE-SÜSSHOF.

In the midst of the village of Appenzell
There stands a green linden-tree.

AND under the green lime-tree sit
fresh-coloured well-knit lads, and
neat maidens in snow-white sleeves,
decked with gay kerchiefs and
ribbons. How they laugh in the
summer sunshine! As for the
boys, they are perfectly wild, and
sing their lusty songs at the top
of their voices, making the air
ring again.

The old men, who are mostly
thin and sunburnt, stand leaning
against the bean-covered garden-
fence, puffing away at their short
wooden pipes, and sending the
smoke of their strong tobacco into
the fresh hay-scented air. The
married women sit at the oriel-
windows, with glittering neck-
laces round their throats and red-
silk hoods on their heads, either
looking out over their bouquet of
Sunday flowers, or else gossiping
busily, in their broad kindly
patois, with any of the companions
of their week's toil who may hap-
pen to be passing.

Shrieking swallows are sailing
about the dark-brown wooden
roofs; and from the soft green
meadows which rise behind the
houses are to be heard the merry
shouts of the young people, the

bleating of the goats, and, farther
off, the rumble of carriages full of
tourists or visitors, who are coming
to undergo the whey-cure.

St. Gall presents a different
scene at this same hour. Héro
the well-dressed fashionable citi-
zens are either walking or driving
comfortably out of all the gates
of the town on their way to the
Freudenberg, to Berneck, Fröh-
lichsegg, and Vöglisteegg, to enjoy
their Sunday view of the green
realm of the Säntis, which extends
as far down as the Glärnisch. The
factory chimneys stare smokeless
into the air, as if they were aston-
ished at themselves; and the long
rows of windows in the mills where
cotton is spun and muslin woven
look at the Sunday sky as if they
found the time tedious. Nothing
is to be heard but the incessant
whistle of the railway engine, and
the sound of the hotel omnibus
as it rattles noisily over the pave-
ment, for the town is taking its
ease like a comfortable citizen.

Each of these two principal
places may be taken as fairly
characteristic of the respective
cantons of Appenzell and St. Gall.

St. Gall encloses the little dis-
trict of Appenzell as the nut-shell
encloses the kernel; and, on look-
ing at it in the map, one is dis-
posed to think Appenzell must be
something very special to be so
carefully guarded. But those who
expect to carry out the comparison
of the nut and the shell will find
themselves mistaken; unless, in-
deed, they be thinking of a silver

nut in a golden shell—then they will be right enough.

The two neighbours, indeed, sometimes have a friendly argument as to which is nut and which shell; and in that case the Appenzeller, who is famed for his witty sayings, has the laugh on his own side. 'Come now,' says he to the native of St. Gall, who is reproaching him with the insignificance and worthlessness of his canton, 'come now, St. Gall is the apple and Appenzell's the core, isn't it? But if the core is rotten, how long will the apple last?' But the air is so pure that neither 'Bitzgi' nor 'Epfel,' neither core nor apple, has ever turned rotten, and it hangs fresh and juicy on the tree of the Confederacy, looking like fruit of golden promise. Appenzell deserves to be compared, not with the core, but rather with a certain jewel, concerning which there is the following tradition: A shepherd of Brüllsau, near Appenzell, had gone with his flocks to the Brülltobel, one of the most bleak and desolate upland valleys of this little mountain-district. In the night he saw something in the stream which shone brightly. It grew larger and larger until it illuminated the whole spot. But he was afraid; and when he went to the place at daybreak he could not find the precious stone, for which he ever afterwards sought in vain. But the beautiful gleaming gem has been found, and the little canton of Appenzell is itself the sapphire, and St. Gall is the golden setting which holds it fast,

'As the ring its diamond.'

Thur, Sitter, and Rhein may be said to be the encircling ring, and the most prominent point of the stone is the lofty Säntis.

The canton of St. Gall seems

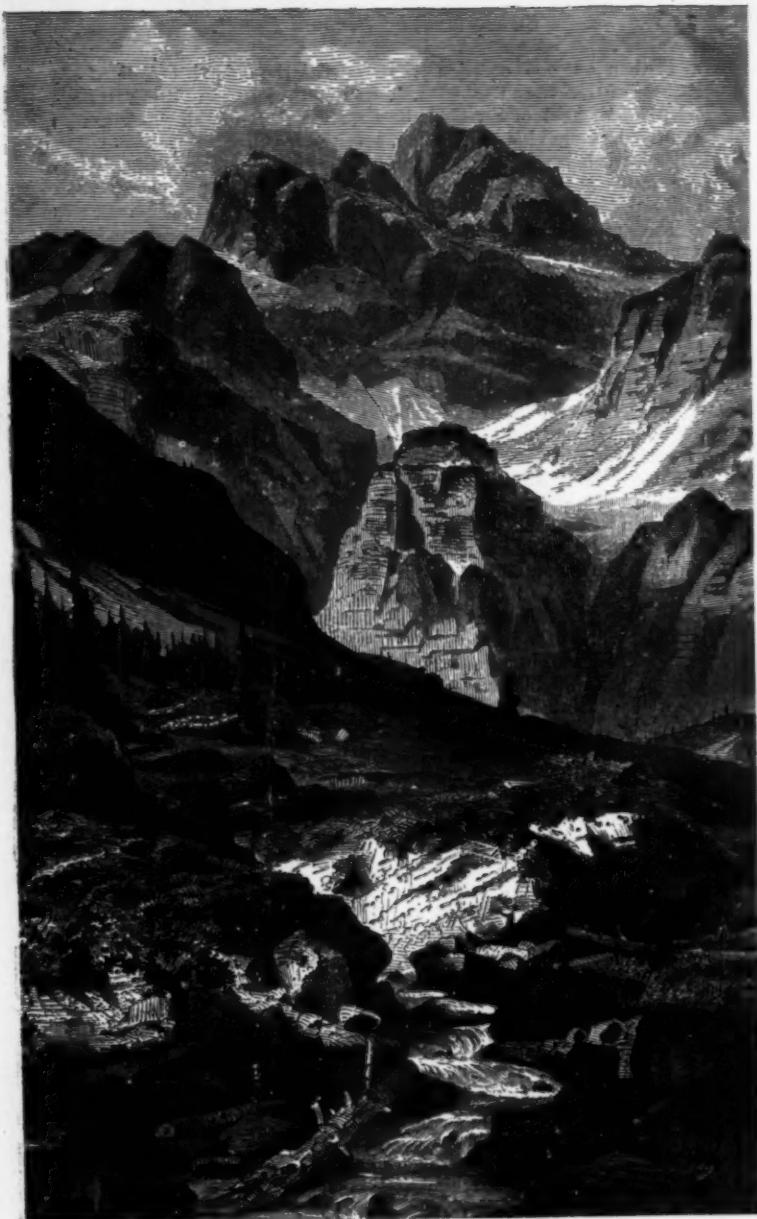
to have been formed in much the same way as the conglomerate which we call 'pudding-stone,' and the Swiss 'Nagelfluh,' which is composed of rounded pebbles of various colours firmly cemented together. Just so St. Gall grew up by degrees out of the ruins of various small principalities which lay within its territory, and had been shivered to pieces by the dire effects of revolution.

Truly there is no lack of vigour or love of labour either in St. Gall or Appenzell, and both alike take part in the pastoral pursuits which are carried on upon the green mountain-slopes, and in the silk-weaving, embroidery, and linen and cotton manufactures which employ the inhabitants of the valleys; in fact, trade is in a most flourishing condition. There is nothing to enervate the people in the climate, and Nature renders them all the assistance in her power by giving them a good supply of water. The rivers Sitter and Saar, Seetz and Linth, Tamina and Thur, Glatt, Neckar, and Steinach, all flow through their territory, which includes the Lake of Wallenstadt and is bordered by the Bodensee and Lake of Zürich.

'The inhabitants of this land,' as an ancient little book says,* 'are rough but upright, daring and dauntless whenever danger threatens their fatherland, as is sufficiently testified by the long war they have carried on, and by their heroic deeds. They maintain themselves by weaving linen, and grow rich on the produce of their cows and goats.'

A more severe judgment than this had been passed upon them previously by the holy Notker, who lived about A.D. 900. The land did not please him at all,

* *Germano-Helceto-Sparta*, by Joh. Caspar Steinern, 1684.



THE SÄNTIS.

and when on one occasion the Abbot of Reichenau asked him what he thought of St. Gall, he answered, 'Dura viris et dura fide, durissima gleba' (The people are coarse, their faith is rude, and the soil very hard).

The person who reports these words adds apologetically, 'This may be a natural result of the mountain-air; for, as it gives greater strength to all sorts of plants and animals, that is, more astringent juices and stronger fibres, its effect upon human beings must be of a similar character, and in proportion as it invigorates them it must make them less pliant and less susceptible of cultivation.'

When St. Gall journeyed through the great forest of Arbon and into the mountains in search of a spot where he might live in quiet retirement, he was accompanied by one of Willimarus's deacons. This man, besides being a deacon, was a mighty hunter, and was well acquainted not only with the paths through the forest, but with the haunts of the wild animals. St. Gall's choice fell upon a spot in an upland valley where the little river Steinach flows over the rocks; but of this the deacon did not at all approve. He saw that the holy man in his defenceless state would be exposed to great danger from the bears and wolves; and perhaps he had learnt by experience that these creatures have no respect either for the cross or the religious habit. He spoke seriously to his master accordingly, but the latter had no fears. Putting his whole trust in God, he immediately consecrated the place and erected a cross of hazel-wood.

To be sure a bear paid him a friendly visit the very first evening, but this did not disturb him. With the greatest *naïveté* he

offered the animal a share of his supper, and then Bruin trotted quietly back to the green shades of the wood.

With the assistance of only two disciples, Mang and Theodor, the saint now set to work with axe and spade to clear the ground, and build himself a meagre log-hut and a little wooden chapel on the very same spot where the abbey church now stands.

The small seed grew and increased. The king's chamberlain, who was attached to him, soon made St. Gall a present of the land upon which he had hitherto sojourned only as a foreigner and visitor. The Bishop of Constance and the criminal judge of Arbon supplied him with woodcutters and agricultural labourers. The number of his disciples increased to twelve, and by degrees a busy little settlement gathered round the solitary log-hut. The adjoining land soon came under cultivation, and a narrow road was made through the wood to Arbon. But the main object of the mission—that of rooting out the belief in the old German and Roman gods—was vigorously pursued at the same time. St. Gall instructed the wild people around him, but devoted yet more attention to the training of his disciples as teachers and preachers, in the hope that through them he might reap a more abundant harvest.

The untiring old man pursued his labours in this district for six-and-twenty years, and he was ninety-six years old when he died. His work, however, survived him. His grave in the lonely wood soon attracted people from far and near, for the old man was reputed to have worked miracles, and many valuable bequests were made to St. Gall. It did not, however, attain to much importance during the first century.



Peterzell lies in a deep valley not far from the source of the Neckar, and owes its origin to the abbey of St. Gall, and its endowment to the lords of Rorschach and the Counts of Toggenburg. It is chiefly noticeable for the old buildings once occupied by the Capitular of St. Gall, which are now used as a parsonage. In the other parsonage lives the pastor of the Reformed Church, for half the community are Romanists, the other half Protestants.

As the convent decayed the prosperity of the town increased ; and as the monks degenerated the citizens became more powerful. Many of the latter indeed were in the service of the abbots, and held fiefs of them ; but those who preferred to be independent were also tolerably well-to-do, thanks to their trades and crafts. We have now reached the close of the thirteenth century, when the light of freedom was beginning to dawn upon the citizens, and many concessions were necessarily made to them in consequence. They were allowed, for one thing, the free control of their houses, which was considered a great matter ; and they were also permitted to elect their own councillors, and to build them a town-hall of their own — *domus supra prætorium*. Merchants begin to settle in the place, others come to the market, and the linen-trade begins. The meadows round the town serve as bleaching-grounds, and the slopes outside the walls look as if they were covered with snow. 'This cheerful fertile spot is,' as we are informed, 'peculiarly adapted for bleaching purposes, and the inhabitants supply Italy, Spain, France, and Germany with great quantities of linen.'

The description given above affords a tolerably accurate picture of what the town was in the

thirteenth century. Its prosperity was on the increase, as was also its longing to be freed from the restraint of the convent ; and it was gathering strength to shake off the yoke.

In the year 1314 a conflagration destroyed almost all that man had laboured so industriously to build. The convent was burnt down, so were the numerous churches and chapels and the houses of the citizens, only eight of which were left standing. For a time there was a doubt as to whether St. Gall should be rebuilt, and many of the citizens prepared to seek a home elsewhere.

From this time, and for several centuries, the people, their country, and their history are all enveloped in a thick cloud of smoke and vapour, from which issue sounds of confusion, the clash of arms, and the cries of victor and vanquished. The veil becomes thicker and thicker, and much goes on beneath it which is hidden from our view.

And now, in this present century, let us lift it up.

Look ! look ! The summer sun is shining brightly, and there runs a railway-train with its panting engine, climbing up from Rorschach to the green wooded mountains about Steinach. A bad bit of road that was to make, for there were so many old ravines and gullies to be crossed. But the higher the railway mounts, the more the prospect widens ; and the eager passengers cannot help being delighted as they gaze from the windows at the golden landscape, the well-cultivated fields, and the white country houses which gleam out upon the slopes.

The town stands higher than almost any other in Europe, and an easy ascent leads the traveller to the top of one of its natural



MARKET-STREET IN ST. GALL.

watch-towers, whence he may obtain an extensive view of the country round. The Freudenberg, as this height is called, is a very favourite resort of old and young, and is much frequented on bright Sundays and holidays. There is a lovely panorama to be seen from the wooded summit.

We are in the realm of the lofty Säntis, and the monarch himself and all his court rise before us to the south; but his dominions are overlooked by other distant mountains, and on bright evenings you may distinctly see the peaks of the Tödi and Glärnisch, the mountains of Schwyz, Mont Pilat, and the Rigi, and may receive a short gentleman-like salutation from the glistening Eiger of the Bernese Oberland.

But there are more attractions for us in the immediate neighbourhood, and we want to make closer acquaintance with the cheerful green meadows of Appenzell.

We pack our knapsack, and the following day finds us at the Hecht or Löwen in Appenzell. If we had come merely to reconnoitre the place itself, we should soon have had enough of it, for there is nothing remarkable about its architecture; and as it lies in a green caldron-like valley, intersected by the Sitter, it cannot be said to be romantically situated. In the Bernese Oberland you have one or more giant mountains facing your hotel window, and you hear the constant sound of grand waterfalls, whereas here you will find only monotonously swelling green hills, not overlooked by a single neighbouring peak, not even by the Säntis. There will be nothing, except perhaps a few little picturesque bits, to attract those who remember the beautiful timber-houses of the Prättigau, or the mediæval architecture of the interior of St. Gall.

The town is crowded, angular, mean-looking, and irregular; and the houses seem to be getting in one another's way. To be sure we have wood-work all brown with age and projecting eaves and oriel; but the houses look as if they had been put together by persons who had no love for or pleasure in them, and they have little in common with the clean, neat, you may almost say shining, and certainly well-lighted dwellings of Outer-Rhoden. Somebody calls Appenzell 'a gray speck on the face of the bright green.'

The only buildings worth mentioning are the parish church, which is rather pretty, and two convents.

But the light of modern times is beginning to penetrate even such places as this; and as Appenzell is very well-to-do, we may expect to see her exchanging the unsightly garb of the shepherd or weaver for something more becoming as soon as the railway comes up to her convent-walls.

Those, then, who have come here to see a town will yawn and go away again as fast as they can; while those who wish to study the people will take up their quarters in one of the clean, cosy, home-like inns, where things are conducted in the good old style, and will ramble about the valleys and mountains of the neighbourhood every morning.

The people are proud of the name of 'Appenzellers,' and are thoroughly natural and unaffected. The traveller will see plenty of them without going beyond the village, should he have the good fortune to find himself there when the Assembly of the canton meets, or at the time of the great annual festival called the 'Chilbe.' 'You see signs of the Chilbe everywhere, and then on a sudden, lo,



A PEASANT OF APPENZELL.

it is here!" say the good people of Appenzell; and we are in luck's way to-day, for the festival is just beginning. Prepare, then, you fine ladies and gentlemen, who are still loitering, maybe, at Gais

or Weissbad or elsewhere,—prepare, this beautiful autumn day, to see what real gaiety is for once in your lives. The mirth is not exactly suited to a London drawing-room, it is true; and instead

of kid gloves and dress-coats you will see shirt-sleeves, heavy hob-nailed shoes, and perhaps leather breeches ; but the enjoyment is great for all that. The majority of those present have been as entirely cut off from the world for some time past as the sailor upon the ocean, and many and various are the privations they have had to endure in their remote mountain-dwellings. Now, however, the superfluous energies which have been pent up for months find vent at last, and the merry-makers feel that they have a right for once to break through all their usual habits and run wild.

The songs of Appenzell are genuine popular songs, with plenty of freshness and boldness, and sometimes not a little impudence, about them. They are older than any of the grandfathers or great-grandfathers now living, and the schoolmaster has not at present succeeded in exterminating them here, as he has done in most of the other cantons. They bear a great resemblance to the famous 'Schnadahüpferln,' and the melodies to which they are sung are likewise similar ; but it is difficult to present them to the English reader, as most people would find the Appenzell dialect well-nigh unintelligible, while their peculiar characteristics must needs evaporate in a translation. Here, however, is a specimen :

'A year is not long :

Then married we'll be,
And I'll be thy husband,
And thou my wif-ie.'

'Black hair, dark-brown eyes,
And a dimple in her chin—
Now you know the sweetheart
That I hope to win.'

'We wander through the shady wood,
Where many a bird doth sing ;
We sit us down to rest awhile,
And watch them on the wing.
We take each other by the hand,
We kiss each other too,
In token that until we part
We will be fond and true.'

'My house has no door,
And my door has no key,
And I've lost my sweetheart—
'Tis all up with me !
And now that I've lost her
I'm glad to be free,
And I quite mean to find
Some one else to love me !'

But although the people love their cattle enthusiastically, they have hardly any genuine pastoral songs. A great many of the expressions in use at home and abroad, numberless proverbs and phrases, have reference to, or are drawn from, the various experiences of the cowherd's life, and the very children have no more favourite game than that of 'playing cows,' where one child is the herdsman, another the cowboy, and the rest cows ; but all this has had no influence whatever on the popular poetry.

People often talk of the famous 'Chüereiha,' literally 'Cow-rows,' better known as the 'Ranz des Vaches,' the song which the cowherds use to call their cattle home ; but even fifty years ago it was beginning to die out, and very few young herdsmen of the present day can sing it correctly. The words are not particularly poetical, but the peculiarly plaintive long-drawn melody used to fill the hearts of the Swiss with a profound feeling of home-sickness if they chanced to hear it when far away from their own land. So powerful, indeed, was its effect, that it caused some of the soldiers on foreign service to desert, which led to its being prohibited in France on pain of death.

It contains some rude and scornful remarks upon matrimony, for the herdsman nowhere feels so free and happy as when he is among the cows he loves so tenderly, and it winds up with the glorification of their merits.

The following is a literal translation of the famous old 'Ranz

des Vaches' of Appenzell, the metre of which is quite irregular and unrhymed, except as regards the two stanzas at the end :

'Come hither, come hither, Loba !
 Call them together by their names, the
 old and the young,
 The old all together, Loba, Loba — —,
 Loba, Lo — — ba !
 Cows all together, together, together,
 Lo — ba, Lo — — ba !
 When I to the cattle am piping, am
 piping, am piping,
 The kine all together haste homewards,
 haste homewards—
 Ay, homewards—yes, homewards.
 They are lovely and free,
 And sweet are they, too, Loba, Loba !
 Were it well to give up our singing,
 Have a cradle stand in the room
 For the man to keep it rocking,
 While the wind blows through every
 hole !
 Lo — ba, Lo — — ba, Loba, Loba,
 Lo — — ba !
 Drive them hither—ay, hither, toge-
 ther, all together ;
 There are Hinked and Stinked,
 And Bbletzett and Gschegett,
 Gflecket and Blässet,
 Schwanzert and Tanzert,
 Grossbuch and Ruch,
 Langbeneri and Haglehneri—
 Drive them hither—yes, hither, now
 hither,
 Loba !
 Since I've been married
 I've had no bread ;
 Since I've been married
 My luck has fled.
 Our cows they are better
 Than any folks alive ;
 They drink of the running brook,
 And long may they thrive !'

The mountaineer's own favourite beverage is what he calls 'sufa,' a mixture of whey and milk ; but he compliments his beloved cows on their better taste.

All things considered, it is not astonishing to find that the setting out for the mountain pasturages in May and June is a very bright and joyous time to the herdsman and his intelligent animals. Very early in the year, as soon as the first soft breath of air seems to whisper that spring is awaking, though the snow be yet lying deep in the valley, a strange sort of restlessness seems to seize both the cattle, who are

weary of their dry food in the stable, and the herdsman, who is sick of the long winter months which he has spent in smoking in the chimney-corner, not much more alive than if he were a dormouse. The cows show their longing for the spring by lowing at unusual times in loud tones, and the herdsman gives more frequent pulls at his leather cap, and goes out oftener to the garden fence, where he stands craning his neck and gazing intently at the mountains by the quarter of an hour together.

The animals and their masters now dream of nothing but green pastures, mountain-air, gushing springs, and the aromatic herbs which grow upon the Alps. And as soon as May has unlocked the mountain-gates, it is as though a flock of wild birds had been suddenly released from a cage. The joyous throng press on and on, up and up ; and though they often have to go through the snow, the day of their departure is a regular fête, observed with ringing of bells, wearing of gala dress, with flowers and songs and loud huzzas, and, in fact, with all the pomp and show that circumstances permit.

The return to the valley at the end of the summer bears the same sort of relation to this festival that All Souls' day does to Easter. It is a day of mourning, and both men and beasts walk along with hanging heads, as if they were weighed down by the more oppressive air of the valley.

These festivals enter so deeply into the life of the dweller among the Alps that he reckons time by them. Thus you will hear him speak of the 'time of the General Assembly,' by which he means the end of April and beginning of May ; or he will say 'such and such a thing took place about the

time of "Funkasonntig," or 'at the annual spring fair,' 'when the cattle set out for the mountain-pastures,' 'after hay-harvest,' 'after the second crop,' 'at the autumn fair,' &c. These festivals are so many luminous centres, from which all the other days of the year radiate.

'Funkasonntig,' which we have just mentioned, is the Sunday called in the Roman calendar *Dominus invocavit*, and its observances, like those of St. John's-day or the summer solstice in Tyrol, are of ancient pagan origin. In both places huge bonfires are lighted on the mountains, all sorts of wild pranks are indulged in, and a sort of game is played with discs of burning wood. In former times the heaps of fagots used to be fired at nightfall amid merry peals from the church-bells, and more superstitious practices were in vogue than is the case at the present day.

The annual meeting of the Assembly of the canton is hardly to be called a festival, though regarded as such as soon as the serious business is despatched. It is a glorious institution; but it now survives only in Inner- and Outer-Rhoden, and the cantons of Obwalden, Nidwalden, Glarus, and Uri, its ancient character being most thoroughly maintained in Inner-Rhoden. The sovereign people come together in the open air; they are their own judges and law-givers, and they still administer and exercise in this primitive and direct fashion the ancient rights which their forefathers won with their blood, and they have themselves since vigorously maintained.

The General Assembly reminds one of the ancient 'Thing' of the German races, where the freemen met armed at the place of sacrifice beneath the sacred tree to

choose their district courts and judges, and to make their laws; or it recalls the *Campus Martius* and *Magicampus*, the March and May meetings of the Franks, which were attended by all those capable of bearing arms out of every district, and consisted of a review of the forces and a free discussion of the question of peace or war.

The Extraordinary Assembly meets only on special occasions. The Ordinary Assembly comes together on a certain Sunday in spring, when all the inhabitants of Inner-Rhoden go up to Appenzell like one man; those of Outer-Rhoden go up one year to Hundswyl and the next to Trojen. The custom is a very ancient one; for the people of Appenzell—and, indeed, each separate parish—were in the habit of assembling as early as the sixteenth century for an annual inspection of arms, those being times when the sword needed to be always sharp and the halberd always bright. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, it was again impressed upon the people that every respectable man who was capable of wearing arms should carry magnificent long side-arms; and even at the present day, though the persons of most distinction wear decent modern swords, you may still see the Appenzeller striding along at the Assembly with some bent, rusty, often very curious weapon which has belonged to his ancestors, and has slumbered peacefully all the year round under the bed. He probably knows no more of its use than what he has learnt from the history of his native province, whose inhabitants were only too often obliged to defend their lives. The sight of an old man bent with years and toil, weather-beaten and white-haired, march-



HOUSE IN APPENZELL.

ing along to the Assembly, with his sword under his arm, and his well-starched Sunday collar standing up so stiffly above his short green frock, may seem absurd ; indeed, the whole procession looks somewhat as if it belonged to the Carnival, as it moves on to the 'chair,' preceded by the band, wearing impossible uniforms, half white and half black, and crashing out the strange 'Assembly March' on their drums and fifes. Some people might be disposed to laugh at the whole proceeding, but they will soon be serious enough if they turn to the history of Appenzell, or glance at its constitutions.

Hats off ! These are the descendants of the brave heroes of Speicher, Häuptlingsberg, and Wolfshalde, who, undismayed by the superior numbers of the foe, wielded sword and battle-axe to such good effect that the yoke of the tyrannical masters who had so long oppressed them was shivered to atoms. This was the time of which the old chronicler spoke with admiring wonder, saying : 'It should also be known that the most strange and wonderful thing happened with regard to the Appenzellers that ever occurred in this land—in a short time they became so powerful as to drive away all the nobility.'

And then throughout the whole land there was 'one staff, one court of justice, one assembly, and one standard,' and to this present day, the only earthly superior they recognise is their own constituted authority as embodied in the person of the 'Landammann,' or chief magistrate. Those here assembled are the mainstay of the country ; they feel themselves to be one homogeneous whole, and none are excluded from their ranks save those who can boast neither arms nor respectability.

And now the Landammann, as being the leader of the people and president of the council, mounts the platform, which is draped with the national colours of white and black, and has two mighty ancient-looking swords crossed in front of it. On his right hand stands the apparitor or herald, who puts the questions under discussion to the vote, and on the left stands the clerk of the council.

The Landammann takes off his hat, and every one present follows his example. A profound silence falls upon the assembled thousands, which shows that the people look upon the meeting as a very serious affair. Then comes the greeting to 'our trusty, faithful, and beloved fellow-countrymen,' which is heard far and wide by all the many spectators gathered around the large circle of voters. Thanks are offered to Heaven for having preserved them to meet together once more, and mention is made of the heroic deeds of their homely ancestors. This introductory act closes with general silent prayer, which never fails to make a deep impression upon strangers unaccustomed to the practice, such as the inhabitants of Outer-Rhoden, where the whole proceedings are conducted in a much more calm and dignified manner.

Then follows the business of the day, the rendering of accounts, and the elections or the voting upon important matters. And here one characteristic of the people, namely, their political ability and parliamentary tact, is most conspicuous. Almost everything goes on as evenly as in a well-ordered parliament house, and often a great deal better. To be sure the day winds up with a great drinking-bout at the best taps in Appenzell ; but town-halls have everywhere been famous for their cellars for

centuries past, and refreshment is doubly needed here, where the people have been waiting about for hours, and have had their throats parched by the raw air of the snowy mountains. Possibly the young men, who are entitled to a vote at the age of eighteen, may indulge in too much of a good thing, and perhaps the old broad-sword, which figured so grandly in the morning's parade, may commit some acts of violence before the evening is over. But there is more than this. The day following is devoted to the 'Fools' Parliament,' a parody of the General Assembly, where one vies with the other in the playing of foolish-practical jokes. Dancing and folly of all sorts are carried to a wild extent, and result in such misdemeanours as make one feel that the whole thing is an unworthy sequel to the solemn proceedings of the previous day. But, says the proverb, 'The General Assembly and the Fools' Parliament each has its day,' so we must shut our eyes to what we had rather not see.

The object of the General Assembly of course is to insure the common weal, and the officers there elected have to do with the whole State; but each separate parish or community is also at liberty to take measures for its own exclusive well-being. Each is its own master, and as each has been permitted to pursue the path of progress without interference from its neighbours, a noble spirit of emulation has been evoked. All are ready to make sacrifices for the public good, and the working of the whole system has been such as to bring about brilliant results in every department of the Government. Most of the offices are honorary, and bring in little or nothing, so that they offer no temptation to those who are greedy

of gain, and many occasions of strife are thereby avoided. The administration of justice, and, in fact, everything, is ordered, settled, and arranged as in a family, and a meeting of the authorities is like a family council. Every native and every Swiss citizen who may have settled in the canton is eligible for office, provided he have attained the age of eighteen, and have received regular religious instruction. None are excluded but the disreputable and those who do not bear arms; but there are certain patriarchal laws which provide that father and son, brothers, father-in-law and son-in-law, uncle and nephew, may not both have a seat and vote in the administration of the community or in the communal court of justice at the same time.

The administration consists of 'captains and councillors,' who are elected from among the parishioners, and their number must not exceed twenty-one, nor fall short of seven. When there is no special court, they have authority to pronounce sentence and to punish lesser offences; and on such occasions they wear the solemn old-fashioned mantle as a badge of office. Formerly, according to ancient custom, the appritor who delivered up the prisoner asked for an advocate for him, and if his request were granted he chose one from the bench of justices. But the delinquent's friends, relations, and pastor were also allowed to plead for him. According to an old decree of the fifteenth century, they had a right to ask, and the justices power to grant, an alteration or mitigation of the penalty, even were the sentence one of death.

There is no imposing apparatus of judges, counsel, barristers, all looking as stiff as the traditions

of red tape can make them. One man holds a pen, he being the clerk of the commune, and he discharges the same duty when a special tribunal is appointed, the latter consisting of from five to

eleven members, whose sole qualification is that they are worthy men.

Other functionaries are the 'Ehegäumer,' among whom are the pastor of the parish and the



WILDKIRCHLI.

two 'captains,' and their business is to keep watch over the habits and conduct of the people. They advise, warn, or call them to account, and keep husbands and wives, parents and children, up to their respective duties one towards the other. Jurists may

smile and shrug their shoulders; and certainly the little canton of Appenzell would find no place in their great schemes of legislature, for its laws have grown out of the peculiar habits and customs of its population, and are the outcome of its struggle for independence



TINDER HOUSES IN HEIDEN.

and autonomy. Its administration may not be altogether free from certain knotty excrescences; but that is rather an advantage than otherwise, and it will last so much the longer, as beneath these knots there is a thoroughly sound and healthy stem.

At Gais, a place of universal resort for the whey-cure, people will find all the charms of home, combined with all the advantages of a sojourn abroad. At the fine inns, dedicated respectively to the Ox, Lamb, and Crown, you may have every comfort, as well as warm goats' whey brought direct from the Alps every morning. There are easy walks in the neighbourhood, such as that to Starkenmühle, which is much frequented; and there are delightful views from the Hohe Wiese and somewhat unpoetical 'Hog's-back.' Those who are desirous of writing an historical poem will make a pilgrimage to the Chapel of Stoss, where four hundred Appenzellers once inflicted a sanguinary defeat upon twelve hundred well-armed Austrians. One pretty spot is called Freundschaftsitz, 'the Friends' Seat,' and other noteworthy places in the neighbourhood are Klausenbühl, Hohe Kelle, and Guggei. These walks are within the reach even of the invalid; but those who are more robust will don their elegant Alpine costumes, and ascend the Kamor and Hohe Kasten to Wildkirchli and the elevated pastures of the Eben- and Seealp, and will return home in the evening, bringing with them lovely bouquets of Alpine flowers for the ladies, unless, indeed, the latter have preferred to gather them for themselves.

But of all these various resorts we must give the palm to Weissbad, which nestles in the most charming of shady green nooks at

the foot of the Säntis, where the three small torrents of Bärenbach, Schwendibach, and Weissbach unite to form the river Sitter, which is said to have received its name (*sit ter una*, or *sitruna*) from St. Gall in honour of the Blessed Trinity.

It is a very lovely spot, surrounded by green meadows, clumps and rows of shady trees, wooded hills and grand mountains at various distances, which shield the valley from the north and temper the warmth of the south wind. Numerous easy paths lead across the Alpine meadows and into the mountains, and they always afford abundance of pleasure and entertainment, being much frequented by healthy tourists as well as invalids.

But we must not forget Heiden. Its pleasant, clean, rather imposing-looking houses may be seen from the other side of Lake Constance; and when we have reached the elevated plateau upon which the village stands, we may let our delighted eyes wander at will over the lake, among the mountains of Tyrol, and the ranges of the Liechtenstein and Vorarlberg, over the forest of Bregenz, in and out the mountains of Glarus, and on to the distant Rigi and Mont Pilat. Immediately round about everything looks green and pleasant, and the hilly canton of Appenzell lies outspread beneath us, dotted all over with its white houses, either standing singly or gathered together in clusters and villages. These scattered cottages seem to justify the tradition that the devil was once flying over this neighbourhood with a sackful of houses, and when he had reached the top of the Säntis he tore a hole in the sack, and so by degrees dropped all the houses in the canton of Appenzell, where they have ever since remained, scattered one

here and another there, without the least order or design. The 'Wild Chapel,' or Wildkirchlein, as it is called, must surely have dropped out of the sack at the same time. How else could it have got into its present position, in the midst of a thicket of Alpine roses on the face of a steep precipice?

Leaving Weissbad, we wend our way across the sloping green meadows of the Valley of Schwendi, and ascend the fragrant mountain-pastures where the snow-white goats are feeding; and as we gaze from the Bodmen Alp at the steep and ever steeper wall of rock which rises perpendicularly to such a tremendous height before us, we may well wonder how we shall ever reach the top. But up we must go, for on the face of this wall hangs the Wildkirchlein, the object of our expedition, and upon it or behind it stretches the famous pasture called the Ebenalp. This precipitous and inaccessible ridge of rock is the most easterly outpost of that one of the three ranges of the Säntis which lies farthest to the north, and forms the throne of the hoary monarch. It stands in an isolated position, being completely cut off from the 'realm of the Säntis' by an abrupt precipice. As we wander on among the trees and shrubs, enjoying the calm beauty of the scene, and looking at the sweet Alpine flowers which grow among the fallen *débris*, we hardly notice the height to which we have ascended, until, on halt-

ing for a moment and turning round, we see to our astonishment that the wood on our left has disappeared in a deep hollow, and the houses at the bottom of the valley look like the dwellings of pygmies, while above them rises a towering line of rocky cliffs, similar to that which we are ascending. These heights, called the Sigleton, are the gigantic advanced guard of the middle Säntis range, which culminates in the Altmann peak in the west. Between them and the Ebenalp block, deep down at the bottom of the valley, lies a calm dark-green lake called the Sealpsee, which reflects the tops of the trees which clothe the mountains on either side, and the bright green meadows of the Meglisalp.

The view to the left is so grand and lovely at the same time, that it would almost lead us to forget the object of our excursion, which is beckoning to us exactly overhead. And yet we shall see something still more grand and sublime when we reach the Ebenalp. As we mount the narrow pathway scratched in the rocks, we ask involuntarily, 'Who was the first man who trod this path, and who conceived the bold idea of building a chapel up yonder?' He must surely have been a man of simple piety, or else he was full of the faith which animated the builders of our grand cathedrals, before which the faithless nineteenth century stands and shakes its head in astonishment.



LAKE OF THE SEEALP.

[See page 271.]

HUSHED UP.

BY A. DE FONBLANQUE,
AUTHOR OF 'A TANGLED SKEIN,' 'BAD LUCK,' ETC.

THE verdict at the coroner's inquest was that the deceased—Edward Fletcher-Baldwyn—'came to his death by the accidental bursting of a certain gun. That the said gun was fired by the deceased; but for what purpose, or at what object, there was no evidence to show.'

A London jury would probably have gone out of their way to censure the owner of the gun for allowing the charge to rust into it, and for leaving it where any one ignorant of its condition could get possession of it; but this jury was a country jury, who found what the coroner told them to find; and this coroner was one of those wise men who do not go seeking after things which are likely to make trouble. And really there was no one to blame except the unfortunate, who was now beyond the reach of censure. A lodger in the farmhouse where the fatal accident happened, he had no business with that gun. The place where it hung was out of his domain—was not even in the same building which he inhabited. No one had spoken to him of any gun. Nevertheless he had discovered the neglected weapon, and on the day of his death (without saying a word to any one) had taken it up to his room, had opened the window, and fired. That is all.

This took place at Elberon Farm, then in the occupation of Mr. James Byles, in the county of York, on the last day of the

year 1870, about four o'clock on a fine bright frosty evening.

Most of the witnesses examined at the inquest spoke of two reports in quick succession; thus contradicting slightly the evidence of Farmer Byles, who was almost positive that the gun had only one charge in it when it was put away. The theory generally accepted was that he had made a mistake; that both barrels were loaded, and that the deceased had either fired them both, or else that the one first fired had exploded the other.

When the reports were heard, and the farmer's family ran up to see what had happened, they found the door locked. The only answers that came to their knocking and questions were some feeble moans.

Then they forced the door, and found their lodger speechless, with a terrible wound on the temple, caused apparently by a fragment of the lock of the burst gun. His right hand was blown almost off. He lived—that is to say, he breathed—for about four hours; but he never regained consciousness.

From the nature of his injuries it was evident that the gun had not gone off unexpectedly. It had been fired from the shoulder, and with deliberation; for the eye had been brought over the breech, and close to it. The charge had of course scattered so widely, that it was not even possible to say in what direction he had aimed. What

could he have aimed at? The Coroner was right. There was no evidence to show. The shooting season—now almost over—had no charms for him, and he was certainly not the sort of man to utilise the close of a fine day by opening his window to kill something. On the contrary, he had an almost morbid horror of taking life. He would not eat poultry, because (as he said) he might have seen the raw material of his dinner 'walking about,' and hated the idea that it should be slaughtered for him. There was a stream, full of excellent trout, within a quarter of a mile of the farm; but he never would fish, or taste the spoils of others' sports, for similar reasons. He had seen the speckled beauties flashing over the shallows, or leaping in the quiet pools, on the banks of which he often loved to sit and muse, although the weather was not always suitable for such outdoor meditations. He was impatient over the slightest cruelty to animals. Could such a man have shot at some wretched sparrow on the road for the mere pleasure of destruction? Had he fired out of the childish love for making a noise, or was it a practical joke?

'Well,' said Mr. Byles, the farmer, when the latter proposition was put to him, 'it might have been, for he was in high spirits that day, higher than he'd been in ever since he came. We'd been teasing him at dinner, telling him he mustn't go about, lest he'd see something he might have to eat, and maybe he thought he'd give us a start.'

Subsequently the farmer stated, as his opinion, that the poor gentleman was evidently 'off his head,' and when asked why he had not told the coroner, replied by another query:

'What was the use? The inquest was held to see if anybody was to blame. No one was to blame. If the deceased had wanted to shoot himself, he would have held the gun very differently. It was just an accident, so why hurt the feelings of the family by suggesting insanity?'

Thus Mr. Byles; and thus the reader will surmise that he was a cut above the average farmer, and be correct in his presumption.

The inquest was attended by Mr. Hugh McDonnell, the brother-in-law of the deceased, who also took possession of his luggage (the greater part of which had been purchased since his arrival at the farm), and superintended the removal of the corpse. One curious fact in the case, which had escaped the attention of the coroner, was that the deceased had all his clothes and effects packed up as though he were going away directly. But he had said nothing to his host about leaving; on the contrary, he had led him to believe that he would remain over New Year's-day.

Soon after the funeral Mr. McDonnell returned, accompanied by the widow, who desired all possible details of her late husband's life and death, which affectionate curiosity was gratified to the utmost. It would be wearisome to give the result, with all its questions, answers, and interruptions, therefore I will condense it into narrative.

'I saw him first,' said Farmer Byles, 'on the road about six miles from here when I was driving home from Clitheroe on the 9th of last October. It was a very wet day, and he seemed weary. He was sitting on his bag by the side of the road, and looked up at me as I came along in a sort of dazed way, like a man that had lost himself. I asked him if I

could give him a lift the way he was going. He laughed, and said it didn't matter which way he went, and so got in.

'As we drove along he told me he hadn't been well, had over-worked himself, and wanted to find some quiet place where he could stay for a month or two and have nothing to bother him. Now we often have gentlemen stopping at the farm in the summer time for the sake of the trout-fishing, and so I told him we could board and lodge him if he liked. He thanked me, but did not seem to take to the idea till he saw the house and heard we had no neighbours and were a good way from any town. Then he jumped at it.

"The very place," he said, half to himself, "for hiding."

"Hiding!" said I, getting a little suspicious.

"Don't be alarmed," said he ; "there is hiding and *hiding*, and seeking and *seeking*, too. I should be rather glad to find a policeman in your parlour ; and as for money, I don't think I owe a shilling in the world, and I suppose this" (producing a roll of bank-notes) "will pay you."

'There was something very taking in his manner, and I soon felt ashamed of my doubts.

'At first he was the best company I ever knew. If he had been my own son come home from abroad after a long absence, he could not have been more glad and cheery and pleased with everything ; interesting himself in all we did about the farm and that, and sending into town for all sorts of things for us as presents, till we were afraid to mention what we would like. Gradually, as Christmas came along, he got more quiet; spent more and more of his time alone in his own room ; became very nervous, starting at every sound along the road ; and

I tell you candidly, if he had not let us know (in confidence) who he was, and we had found out that his story was true, we should have got rid of him, for he behaved just like a man who had committed some crime and was hiding from justice. Why did I not write to his family ? I said he told us who he was in *confidence*. He told us that part of his troubles were family troubles, and we believed him. But the most extraordinary thing was this : he said he knew that he had become nervous and disagreeable, begged our pardon if he had made our Christmas dull, and asked us to bear with him for a little longer, as he would be himself again on the 1st of January. He said that was his birthday as well as New Year's-day, and promised we should keep it in style. And he meant what he said ; for he had ordered a hamper of champagne, and no end of cakes and toys for the young ones. He was to complete his thirty-fourth year on the last day of December, and he never saw it out. On the very day of his death he picked up his former good spirits, and the last thing I saw of him he was snowballing with our children in the front orchard.'

At this point Mr. McDonnell interposed, speaking to the widow,

'That would be about half-past twelve o'clock.'

Her only answer was a deep sigh.

'He broke away from them suddenly,' the farmer went on, 'and ran off to his room.'

'Did he tell your children why he left them ? Did he say if he had seen any—anything ?' asked McDonnell.

'I don't think so. They took no notice of him. He was often like that.'

A good deal of what followed is not necessary for the purposes of this narrative. It appeared to satisfy the persons immediately interested, and the day came for their departure.

But what brought satisfaction to them planted a vague suspicion in the breast of Farmer Byles. It struck him that they knew some things which he had not told them, and which were not in the evidence taken at the inquest. That observation about half-past twelve o'clock, for example. The children had not fixed any exact time; they only said it was before dinner. Not much in this of itself, but put together with other remarks it made the good man uncomfortable. He became more and more uncomfortable when he discovered that Mr. McDonnell had been seen driving a gig on the road near the farm on the 31st of December, that he had called at a cottage about six miles farther on, and had left it at an hour which would account for his passing the house on his return about the time of the accident.

In short he had driven by at half-past twelve, when Baldwyn had suddenly broken off his game with the little folks; so McDonnell must have *heard* the explosions at any rate, as he returned (for there was no other road back to the place where he had hired the gig he drove) at four.

And yet he had come to the inquest full of surprise and grief, had asked questions as though the scene were new to him, and held his tongue whilst the discussion as to one report or two was going on. Why did he inquire if his wife's brother had seen 'any—anything from the orchard'? He had evidently started to say *anybody*. Had the dead man seen and recognised him? What could have been his motive

for concealing his first visit? The visit itself turned out to be a lawful one. In his capacity as an attorney he had come to take the evidence (in a right-of-way case) of a very old woman, who had left the neighbourhood of London (where the action arose) to live with her grandson in Yorkshire. This latter received the lawyer, and saw him off; but some cattle business of his own at Hull took him away from home about the same time. So he never heard of the accident or read an account of the inquest till he returned. If he had known all about it he would not have connected McDonnell with it in any way; but when he recognised him at Elberon Farm, greatly to Byles's surprise, and explained when and where they had become acquainted, the latter's suspicions grew apace.

Then he thought of that second report. When there was no one to accuse it had not mattered how many barrels were loaded; but now? What if one of those reports had been a shot fired *at* his lodger? What if he had seized that gun in self-defence?

Very cautiously and as he thought kindly, Farmer Byles broke the subject to Mrs. Fletcher-Baldwyn, who took up Mr. McDonnell's defence with a warmth which added to the Yorkshireman's honest doubts. The deceased had died intestate, and the bulk of his property went to his sister and her children. Well, here was the man directly benefited by his death acting in the most suspicious manner; and here was the widow (who from affluence was plunged almost into poverty) defending him—defending one who was certainly about to deprive her of her home, and perhaps had committed murder to do so.

Farmer Byles made Mr. McDonnell understand very plainly

that if he did not give him a satisfactory explanation of his conduct in private he would have to offer one before a magistrate in open court. Mr. McDonnell became greatly agitated at the threat, and then tried to pooh-pooh the suspicions by which it was prompted. This only strengthened them. Indeed things went so far that doors were locked, a horse saddled, and a labourer called from his work to ride into the next town for a policeman.

'Anything but that!' cried the widow to her supposed accomplice. 'We must trust him; and, O sir' (turning to the farmer), 'you will keep our terrible secret—you will respect the memory of the dead!'

'I tell you frankly,' Byles replied, 'there's many besides me that are asking questions.'

'Then it must all come out!' gasped the lady, wringing her hand.

'I expect it must,' growled Byles.

* * * * *

'You would not believe a word I said,' McDonnell began, 'if I were to place before you the chain of causes which led to my poor brother-in-law's death. He must unwind it himself.'

'Himself!' exclaimed the farmer.

'Yes. It is contained in a part of his diary which I found in his valise.'

'And secreted from the coroner?'

'And secreted from the coroner. When you have read it, you will know why; and will not, I hope, blame me. But I did not bring it here. Come home with us—I am sure Mrs. Fletcher-Baldwyn will second this suggestion—as our friend and guest. As for me, you can come also as a constable, if

you like, and not let me out of your sight till I have satisfied you that I am in no way to blame.'

So Mr. Byles, like an honest bulldog, went with them, and read the diary of the late Fletcher-Baldwyn, from the 4th of February 1865 to the 31st of December 1870, from the day after his return from the West Indies (where he had been employed, until his father's death made him head of the firm in England) down to his own mysterious end.

This again I must edit, so to speak, leaving out all that is not connected with the main points before us.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF EDWARD FLETCHER-BALDWYN.

Feb. 4, 1865. I dreamt the same thing twice on my passage home, but never gave it a second waking thought till to-day. I often repeat foolish dreams. I dream I am dressing for some engagement and cannot find my boots; when I have got them, I miss my coat, and so on. Again, I fancy I am a boy once more, riding a pony (long since gathered to his fathers) through a stream divided in two by an island in which a huge oak-tree grows. I can shut my eyes now and see the shallow water rushing over the golden sand, and the long green flag-weeds waving in the deeps. And yet there is no such place—at least no such place that I know of. I suppose dreams come reflected from dreams, just as they come from realities; but how about the *first* dream of an *unreality*? The reality is always distorted or confused in the dream. It is only the *unreal* that comes back, time after time, clear and consistent with itself. The dream which

comes back so strangely to me now was repeated incident for incident, and word for word, from itself.

I was walking along a road through some heath or common, evidently in England, and the sun was setting. My way was uphill, a rather steep hill, and the surroundings somehow gave me the idea that I should get a view of the sea from the top. I pushed on, and became aware of a man standing on the summit, with his back towards me. He was dressed all in black, and the red glow beyond him threw his figure out very distinctly against the horizon. When I was about to pass him, he turned round suddenly, and stretched out his hand as though we were old friends, and he had been waiting for me by appointment. It seemed to me that this was quite natural, and we shook hands without a word. Then he took my arm, and in a tone as though one would say, 'Come and take a stroll,' to an intimate, he said, '*Come, and I will show you your grave.*'

Again his conduct seemed reasonable, and I suppose I should have walked on with him for miles if necessary. But the scene changed; we entered a house, a square, flat-fronted, red-brick, blue-tiled, ugly, and respectable mansion, such as you may find in the outskirts of any country town, and which is generally occupied by the doctor or the leading attorney, if it is not a boarding-school. We passed through the usual oak-floored hall into the usual dining-room, with its usual Turkey carpet, its usual formal sideboard (with the usual portrait of the owner over it), and the usual array of leather-seated chairs drawn up in hollow squares around the walls. But where the table ought to have been, with its usual red

and black cover, was something very unusual.

There stood a tomb!

A marble tomb, rising out of the floor, half above it, and half below, on the slab of which was this inscription :

Sacred to the Memory
of
EDWARD FLETCHER-BALDWYN
of CAULDERWOLDE,
WHO DIED
December 31st, 1870,
Aged 34 Years.

Now the man on the hill had said, 'Come, and I will show you *your* grave;' but this one was that of some one else. My name is Fletcher, not Fletcher-Baldwyn, and I have nothing to do with Caulderwolde, whatever that is, or wherever it may be. I never heard of such a place. Thus I reasoned in my dream, and turned round to ask for an explanation; but the man was gone, and the house was on fire, and the shock produced by the double surprise woke me.

Dreaming this the second time, it seemed to come with all the force of novelty. I had no knowledge of what was to happen first, or what would follow. I woke in suspense at the end, as before, and, as I have already written, did not give it a second waking thought.

I landed at Southampton yesterday evening, took the first train for London, and arrived at our (I may now say *my*) house so tired that I went straight to my room, begging Emma to make my excuses to McDonnell when he should arrive.*

This morning I was up as usual,

* This gentleman was engaged to Miss Emma Fletcher, and was expected from Manchester (where he then lived) by the last train. He was personally unknown to the writer of this diary until the day after his arrival in England.

early, and made for the breakfast-room. When my hand was on the lock of the door, and before I had opened it, before I saw that there was a man dressed all in black standing with his back to me on the hearth-rug, with the red glow of the fire beyond him, my dream flashed back ! I knew he would turn round and hold out his hand as though we were old friends, and he had been waiting for me.

I knew I should accept his salutation as quite natural, and that we should shake hands without a word. And so it was. He turned exactly as I expected, and *I saw the man who had shown me my grave in my dream !*

This is what makes me recall it, and really there is something very odd so far.

Feb. 5. After reading over what I wrote last night, it strikes me that there isn't anything so very odd after all. It is nonsense to think that I saw McDonnell *before* I opened the door. It was his black back and the fire-glow which put me in mind of that silly dream ; and then, when he turned round, I fancied his face was like that of the man on the hill. Now this is the way to test it. If I had asked myself ten minutes before our meeting what the face of my dream-man was like, could I have described it ? I could not. That settles the point. How simple these 'odd' things become when you examine them ! McDonnell was in mourning for my poor father out of respect for us. He was warming his hands at the fire because it was cold, and consequently had to turn his back to the door. We had never met ; but he knew I was the only other man in the house, and I knew he was the only guest. It would have been absurd if two future

brothers-in-law had stood on the ceremony of an introduction, especially when one of them was in his own house, and the other his guest. Of course we didn't talk about graves, and of course we shook hands without a word. He says that I am not at all the sort of man he expected to find in Emma's brother. The truth is she wanted me to make a favourable impression on her lover, and therefore did not flatter me in her descriptions. She played the same game on him, and we are mutually disappointed — agreeably. This shows that he has not been dreaming about *me*.

Feb. 11. I have had that dream again, and the face of the man on the hill *is* McDonnell's. Have I made it thus by thinking, or was it always so ?

Feb. 28. Things are getting decidedly 'odd' again. I asked McDonnell if he knew any place called Caulderwolde. He did not; but Emma, who was writing some letters at the time, caught the sound and answered me. From what she said, it seems that a distant relative of ours, Sir Jasper Baldwyn, has a grand house of that name in Kent ; that his elder son has deeply offended him by a low marriage, and that the second, who is in the army, has been sent for to be made the heir. If this be the Captain Baldwyn whom I met at Barbadoes, he has a beautiful young wife and two fine boys already. Strange that neither of us should have known of the relationship ! I suppose he was too proud to acknowledge a *trader* for his cousin. If it were not for him I might possibly inherit Caulderwolde. I wonder if his name is Edward Fletcher ? *Edward Fletcher-Baldwyn of Caulderwolde !* It sounds well. I think I should make a good

county gentleman. Caulderwolde *ought* to be a fine place. Stop! If I were Fletcher-Baldwyn of Caulderwolde I should have only about five years to live, according to the dream. I am to die on the 31st of December 1870, aged 34. Odd that whatever is answerable for that vision should have fixed upon the 31st of December—the day before my birthday, the last day of my 34th year that is to be—as the date of my death! Suppose people held their lives for a fixed term as they hold their houses, what would become of us? I think we should go mad. The idea of counting the years and the months and the hours and the moments at the last! Ugh, it makes my blood run cold!

Sept. 16. Just returned from a visit to my cousin Sir Jasper. Caulderwolde *is* a fine place. Emma and I are to spend Christmas there, when Captain Baldwyn and his family come home. Sir Jasper has taken quite a fancy to us. Good old fellow! he is so proud of his race, and so pleased to have them about him, it is a thousand pities that that fool of an elder son has disgraced it. The idea of losing Caulderwolde for a painted vixen out of a music-hall! I would give up—Why can I not shake off the recollection of that idiotic dream which buries me in the middle of a gentleman's dining-room? Can anything be more absurd? It has come back to me, I suppose, because the way to Caulderwolde over Easterham Chart is something like the road in dreamland on which I met McDonnell's double. By the bye, that person does not improve upon acquaintance. He is cold and hard, and I don't think he is sincere. I wonder at Emma's love for such a fellow. I'm sure he is unscrupulous and vindictive.

Dec. 20 (at Caulderwolde). I can scarcely write for excitement. My God, how horribly strange all this is! We were invited here to rejoice with Sir Jasper over the return of the Baldwyns, and we have come to break to him the news of their loss. All of them—husband, wife, children—at one blow! Forty souls, including thirteen saloon passengers, were saved from the sinking ship; why should they—why should *all* of them—have perished? And that hateful McDonnell, who brought the news, said this morning as we were starting, 'If you play your cards well, you will have—Caulderwolde.' It is very probable now that I shall; but why must this cold-blooded ruffian say so? What business is it of his? I suppose he thinks I shall settle something handsome on Emma. He is mistaken. I've already told her I don't approve of the man. Why my poor father sanctioned their engagement is a mystery to me. I can't forbid her marrying him, but they'll get no help from me—Caulderwolde or no Caulderwolde—or from Sir Jasper either, if I have any influence over him.

Jan. 13, 1866. It is all very fine for Sir Jasper to say that he does not like his nearest male relative (he ignores the existence of his son) to be connected with trade, but I'm not going to fall between two stools. He may live another twenty years; may marry, and have other children. I'm not going to sell the business at a loss on the chance of his making me his heir. He ought to state distinctly what his intentions are. I will tell him to-morrow that I cannot afford to stay any longer away from my *trade*. That will make him speak out.

Nov. 30. Just returned from the funeral and reading of the will

which makes me master of Caulderwolde. It is extraordinary how true my instincts are. I felt that McDonnell was a viper, and now I know he is. He may deny it all day, but I am convinced it is his work; for I often told poor old Sir Jasper that I had an objection to change my name. Fletcher is just as good a name as Baldwyn. I was a fool to let him (McDonnell, I mean) be employed at all in drawing the will. I might have been sure he would make some mischief. I don't care so much about the reversion of the Caulderwolde estate going to my sister and her children in case I die without issue, because that is so very remote. I shall marry now, of course. But what I hate is to be obliged to take another name. It seems as though I were fulfilling that idiotic dream just as I had begun to forget all about it. Never mind. The thing has to be taken altogether, of course. I am (or soon shall be) Edward Fletcher-Baldwyn of Caulderwolde in the regular and natural course of events; but this is no reason why I should die on the 31st of December 1870, and be buried in the middle of a Turkey carpet.

March 1, 1867 (at Geneva). Wrote to Emma, declining to stand godfather to her boy. She chose between me and that creature McDonnell, and must abide by her choice. Wrote also to Spinks, saying I shall not return to Caulderwolde this year. Before the place was mine I thought it beautiful; and the moment I got it I hated it. Those roads over the Chart are *so* dreary. Received a letter from the Hatherns. They will be here on Friday. I wonder if Sibyl Hathern *really* cares anything for that puppy Calverly?

June 23. Answer to the conundrum propounded in my journal of March 1st—*she doesn't*. She cares for me—for *me*, as I stand in ten pounds'-worth of clothes, not knowing that I am a man of fortune. Shall I play the Lord of Burleigh, and take her third class to my 'castle' in a cotton gown? I am afraid that the prosaic custom of settlements has put these romantic surprises out of date. I shall have to talk settlements with old Hathern tomorrow. A foolish letter from Spinks, saying that Dr. Massinger's house has been burned down to the ground. I have not the least recollection of the doctor, or his house either. It is not on my land; so why should Spinks bother me about it? I believe he writes for the pleasure of writing.

June 30. By the merest chance I find that these Hatherns—all of them, Sibyl included—have made a dead-set at me, well knowing who I am and what I am worth. Sibyl let it out quite by accident. When she was a little girl she used to visit near Caulderwolde, and she knows the country roads better than I do. And I thought her the most true and simple-hearted of women! Mercenary little witch! Bah, they are all alike! Spinks wants me to take shares in a new burying-ground they are going to make, as the old churchyard is to be condemned. If I put three hundred pounds in the Caulderwolde Necropolis Company, I can have an 'allotment,' as well as a dividend out of other people's graves, for my money. Not a very cheerful investment; but I suppose I ought to make it.

July 2. I have been trying to harden my heart against Sibyl, but I cannot. Besides, her excuses are difficult to answer. I

had told her that I hated Caulderwolde; so why, she asks, should she have spoken of it, and so raised a disagreeable subject? She was so indignant, and looked so handsome when I taxed her with insincerity, that I half repented what I had done before she answered. What a fool a man in love can be made! I went into the room resolved to break off the engagement, and I begged her pardon on my knees before I left it! I shall always think that the old people 'ran cunning'; but I'm not going to marry *them*.

Aug. 26, 1868. I wonder why I ever took a dislike to Caulderwolde! Sibyl says we once had quite a quarrel over it. I suppose I must have had some cause—good, bad, or indifferent. It could not have been a very strong one, though. I wish I could find my diary for 1867; I should then be able to recall what was passing in my mind at the time. All I can now remember is that the place seemed very gloomy after old Sir Jasper's death, and that I went abroad for a month, and stayed away two years.

Caulderwolde, thanks to Sibyl's taste and management, is a very different place from what it was before our marriage; and then the baby—I beg his pardon, *the heir*! What a change the advent of that morsel of humanity has wrought! I must hunt up my old diaries, and take a look back into my old life, if only to measure by contrast how happy I am, and how thankful I should be.

Mem. To see Spinks about those cottages at Fenny Lornden. They are in a horrid state. Do low places make dirty people? or would low people turn any place into a pest-hole? I shall try to decide this point by pulling down those cottages, building

others on the hill-side, and giving the people a chance of living decently.

Mem. No. 2. That Sibyl is not to go amongst them till the change is made.

Aug. 28. My warning came too late; my good intentions were too long deferred. O God! to think that it is all my own fault! To think that the punishment for my criminal carelessness about the poor folk committed to my charge has fallen on my innocent wife and child! It is horribly unjust. Why should I escape—I, who am responsible for the outbreak of this fever, if any one is—and my poor tender Sibyl be stricken? Why should the pest she brought home from her mission of love have passed on to the boy, and not to me? There can be no Providence if such things may be. All is chance!

Oct. 1. May Heaven forgive me for what I wrote on the 28th! Sibyl is better. In my agony, before the change came, I repeated that blasphemy. It was wrung from me, and she—well, she is an angel. I asked her to pray for me; she said, 'Let us pray together.' I knelt down with her dear weak burning hands between my own, and our prayers have been granted. Is this chance?

Oct. 7. The doctors have held their consultation and left. The verdict is death. He may live till daybreak. My boy, my boy!

All the above extracts have been carefully marked in the various volumes of the diaries which contained them. The widow found each in its turn for Farmer Byles, and left him to read it himself. When he had read the last, she shut the book,

and said, 'There is no more here bearing on the subject. The next entry was written in your house on a loose sheet of paper, and cannot be understood without an explanation. We lost our darling boy on the 7th of October 1868, and he was buried in the ground reserved for us in the new cemetery. His grave was one of the first made there. On the anniversary of his death we went, my husband and I (as we had often done before), to place flowers on his grave. For a long time we stood there, hand in hand, sad and silent. At last—I know not why—an old recollection came over me. "How strange," I said, "it is that some of the happiest days of my girlhood were spent on this now sad spot!"

"Did you play here before it was God's acre?" asked my husband.

"Often and often," I replied. "Don't you know that Doctor Massinger lived here before his house was burned down, and they bought the land for the cemetery?"

"I did not," he said wearily. "Spinks wrote to me about the fire, but I had no interest in the spot then. Who was Doctor Massinger?"

"I told him that he was an old friend of my father; that they had been in the army together in India, where the doctor by some lucky speculations made a small fortune; that he retired from the service, and bought Lornden Beeches, where he lived till the fire. I added that he was rather an eccentric man, who shunned general society, and held political opinions which at one time caused some scandal in the country.

"This," I explained, "is probably the reason why you did not

meet him at Caulderwolde in old Sir Jasper's time. They had a serious quarrel. I was too young at the time to know the exact cause; but it was something about a poacher, and after it they did not speak. I think my father once tried to make it up; but this does not interest you."

"Not much—not at all, except so far as it relates to you," he replied tenderly. "So you were a happy child *here*?"

"Yes," I said, "very happy. After India these cool green fields seemed like Paradise. The garden was my great delight. It extended from near that great beech to the crest of the hill. That part where the turf is so smooth and level was the lawn. The road was a good deal farther back then, and it must have been exactly where we now are that the house stood," I went on, taking my "bearings," as a sailor would say, from the position of the trees and the slope of the grass. "Yes; here ran the entrance-hall, and there, close beside where our darling sleeps, was the dining-room."

"The words were hardly out of my mouth when my husband gave a piercing shriek, and staggered, pale and trembling, against the gravestone.

"Describe that house," he gasped; "tell me exactly what it was like."

"It was an old-fashioned, formal, red-brick house," I said, "and my room—"

"There was an oak-floored hall," he interrupted, getting more and more excited, "and the dining-room was the second door on the right. It had a Turkey carpet on the floor, and a portrait over the mantelpiece."

"Why, I thought you did not know—" I began.

"Again he interrupted. "Is it

so? Is it as I have said? Was the centre of that room here—*here* where I stand—at the side of our child's grave, over the place reserved for mine?"

"I think so," was my reply.

"Do not think," he said solemnly; "be *sure*. You little imagine what may turn upon your answer. Fancy that you can rebuild the place. Here ran the hall, you say. Well, you know what a ground-plan is? Make one in your mind's eye, and tell me whereabouts the table would stand in that dining-room."

"I did as he bade me, and after as good a calculation as I could make I found that it would stand, as he said, over the place which had been selected for our last home.

"He turned aside with a deep sigh, and bade me go home alone. He had to see his agent, and would follow.

"The rest of the day and all that night he was restless and excited, but did not return to the subject of our conversation in the cemetery, except once, when I said I feared he was ill, and begged him to see the doctor. I remember now with what strange warmth he insisted that there was nothing the matter with him. Then he turned the subject with a laugh, and said, "When people shudder you say, 'Some one is walking over your grave.' Well, I walked over my own grave to-day, and a sudden spasm made me call out. Does that prove I am ill?"

"The next morning he started for London (as he said) on business; but I do not think he ever went there. He sent me a telegram from Redhill stating that he might have to go abroad, and would send me word where to write to him as soon as his plans were more settled.

"I never saw him again, and I

leave you to imagine the agony of suspense and fear in which I lived for nearly three months.

"Now, Mr. Byles, read over once more his account of that strange and wonderful dream—the dream he had never told even to me, and had almost forgotten; the dream, every portion of which, except *one*, had been fulfilled. Fulfilment of this one had become possible."

"I remember all about it," said Byles; "go on please. I don't quite see what it has to do with the shooting, though."

"This will show," replied the widow, placing a loose sheet of paper before him; "read."

He read as follows:

Elberon Farm, Oct. 12. I have been here three days in perfect peace, and have had opportunities of calm and reasonable reflection. The dream *can* be fulfilled throughout, but will it? All depends upon McDonnell, whose cursed hand is in every detail of fulfilment. He greeted me in my own house just as the man who showed me my grave had greeted me on the moor. He brought the news of the wreck, and was the first to suggest that Caulderwolde could be mine. It was through him that Sir Jasper made me change my name. When I left my wife in the cemetery I called on Spinks, and asked how that particular plot of ground came to be allotted to me. He said he had chosen it on the advice of the attorney of the company, who was very friendly, and recommended it as the best place, on account of its being on high land, and bearing the finest trees about. I asked the name of that attorney, and of course found it was McDonnell! I had introduced him to business at Caulderwolde when we were friends. And this

was his gratitude! *He showed me my grave.* Not precisely as in the dream, for that would be impossible, but as nearly as he could, I being alone. He will go on; I have a rooted presentiment that he will go on, and send me to that grave, if I give him the merest chance. My only hope is to hide somewhere where he cannot find me till the 31st of December has passed, and for that purpose I am here. Sometimes I think that my best plan would be to seek him out, and kill him in self-defence. It would be self-defence, morally and legally too. My boy is dead! The scoundrel's wife has the reversion of Caulderwolde under Sir Jasper's will, if I die without issue. I could prove motive. I could show how he has followed me up, step by step. He has dreamed that dream himself, I am confident he has, but I could not prove that. No; I will hide.

Nov. 23. I have had to tell Byles who I am, so as not to be turned out. He will keep my secret. I cannot write up my diary regularly as I used. I suppose it is because I have not my proper book. I shall go home on the 1st of January, when I enter on my thirty-fifth year and am safe. Then I will copy this, and fill up all I have thought. I shall remember most of what has passed through my mind, and Sibyl and I will have a good laugh over it.

Nov. 31. If the dream be true, I have just one month to live. Thirty-one days, seven hundred and forty-four hours, forty-four thousand six hundred and forty minutes. When my boy was dying we counted the hours and the minutes, but he did not know when he was to die. Some of my minutes have passed as I am writing. This sort of thing

will drive me mad. I must *not* think.

I am in excellent bodily health. I even sleep well; no dreams. My appetite is good, only I cannot bear the idea of things being killed for me. When I insured my life for Sibyl the doctors said that all my organs were perfect. What *can* happen?

Dec. 31. He has found me out! I have seen him! He will return and do his damnable work. I saw him drive past as I was playing with the children. And I have not even a weapon. Stay, there is that old gun in the out-house; I will pack up all my things and—

Here followed a few words so blotted as to be illegible.

'Now,' said McDonnell, 'you must hear me. I need scarcely assure you that I knew nothing of that mysterious dream, and therefore could not have aided in making its prophecy true. I did not know that my brother-in-law had left Caulderwolde. Mrs. Fletcher-Baldwyn will tell you that she made various excuses for his absence, not wishing to give rise for scandal. I went to Yorkshire purely on professional business, the nature of which you know. When I passed your farm I had not the remotest idea that he was within two hundred miles of me. As I returned, I heard a window open violently. I looked up, and saw him—saw him lean forward and take deliberate aim at me. Then came a flash, and two reports in quick succession, one louder than the other. They startled the horse I drove, and he ran away with me. That is all I know.'

'What was I to do? Drive back and give my wife's brother into custody for an attempt at murder? Remember I was not

aware that the gun had burst. I did not know he was hurt till I got his widow's telegram. I had to consider what to do about *myself* only, and therefore could afford to be deliberate.

'I went home, half dazed, to think it over, and found the telegram calling me to Caulderwolde.

'I went back to Elberon as fast as steam could take me, and examined the dead man's valise for some clue to his conduct. Almost the first thing I found was that crumpled paper you have just read. This, of course, put us

upon further search. We discovered his old diaries at Caulderwolde, and they told us all.

'Now, Mr. Byles, I appeal to you as a husband whether this poor lady's feelings should be wrung by a public inquiry into this most painful case? Is it not one that may properly be hushed up?'

And hushed up it was. I who tell it now break no confidence; for I have not given one real name, or place, or date, and the person who might be hurt by a successful guess at the truth has been dead for several years.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.
2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.
3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.
4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.
5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. IV.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

[The initial, central, and final letters of the Lights form three distinct but connected words.]

THEY come and they cut us most rudely, but then,
Having cut us direct, they keep coming again,
And follow us home, where we match them, for though
They may blow where they list we may list where they blow.

I.

Stone walls no prison ! Iron bars no cage !
This you may do in them I dare engage.

II.

Born at Bologna, there he carved his way
To fame and fortune—sculpt it, one may say.

III.

Whatever this may be, I still advise,
Give it to him who best deserves the prize.

IV.

Men wiser grow, so some M.P.s, 'tis plain,
Who have been this will ne'er be this again.

V.

These oft for breakfast, sometimes too for tea,
Or dinner at a roadside inn you see.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the April Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by March the 11th.

ANSWER TO No. III. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

1. C	V.
2. H I A W A T H	A
3. I D E N T I C A	L
4. L U T	E
5. D O	N
6. H A R V E S	T
7. O C T R O	I
8. O T T O M A	N
9. D U P	E
10. S I R I U	S

Explanatory Notes.—Light 1. Genesis v. 6. 5. To put on, as collar, stock, &c.
10. The dog-star.

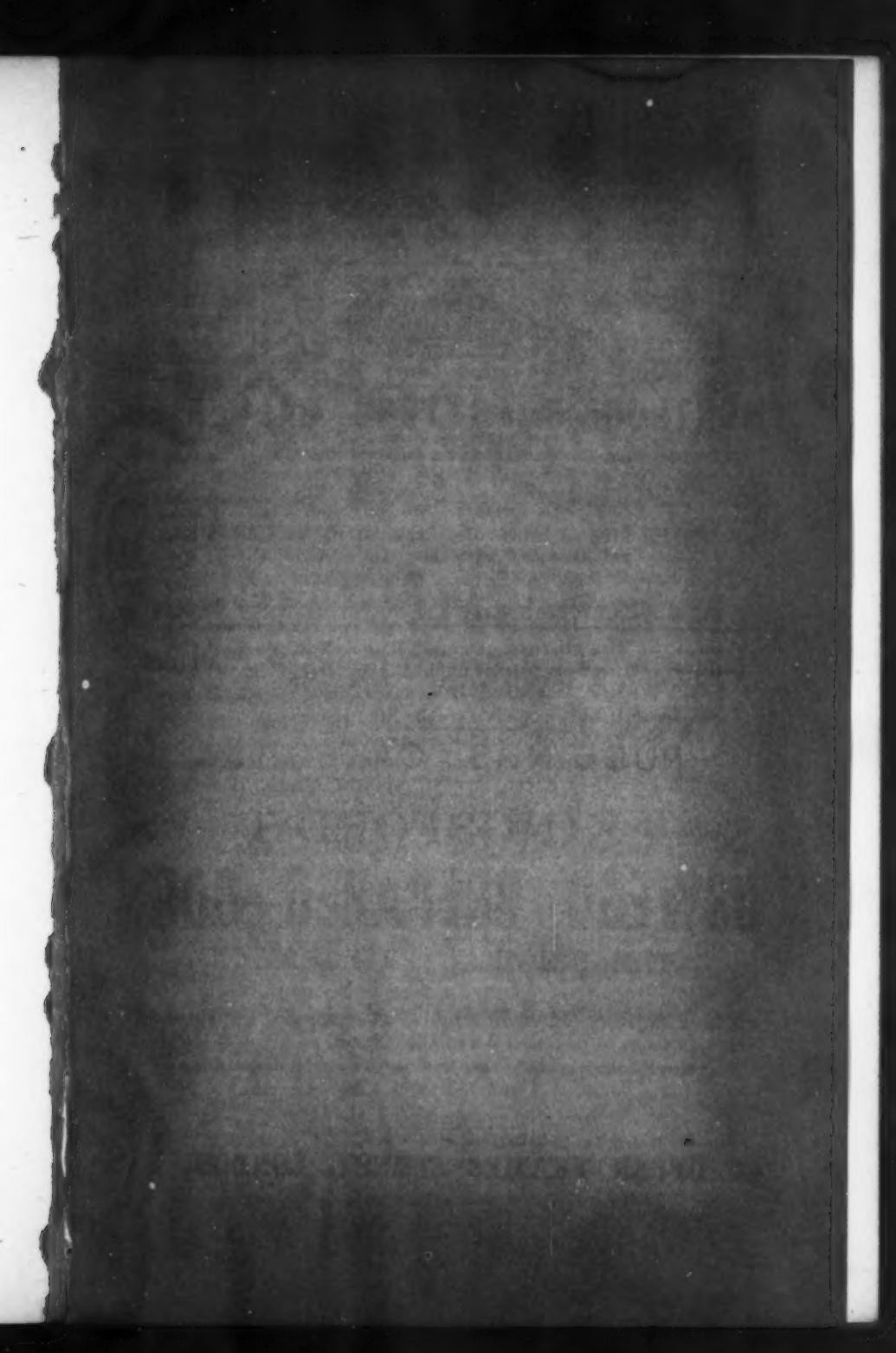
Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Acephate, Aces, Acipenser, Araba, Beatrice W., Bob Acres, Bon Gualtier, Brief, Bumpkin, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Capello, Cat & Kittens, Cats & Co., Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Crumbs, Double Elephant, Elaine, Eros, Etak, Excelsior Jack, General Buncombe, Gherkins, Gimlet-Eye, G. U. E., Hag, Hampton Courtier, Harrow Road West, H. B., Henricus, Hibernicus, Ignoramus, Incoherent, Jack, John-o'-Gaunt, Kanitbeko, Kew, Lanreath, L. E. K., Lizzie, Manus O'Toole, Mouse, Mrs. Dearhat, Mungo, Murra, Newall, Nil Desperandum, Non sine gloria, No. 2, Oban, Oberstwachtmeister, Old Log, Palmyra, Pat, Patty Probit, Penton, Pip, Pud, Puss, Quill, Racer, Roe, Semie, Shaitân, Sir Hans Sloane, Squib, Tally-ho, The Snark, Thunder, Titus A. Drum, Tory, Verulam, Wee Plots, Welsh Rabbit, White Lancer, Yours truly, Yule, and one without signature—84 correct, and 136 incorrect: 220 in all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correct answers to No. II. from Draab and Bumfit were received too late to be credited.

The word 'Article' cannot be considered correct for the second light of No. II.

Gladys' answer to No. II. did not come to hand.





Forgetting her letter, which she still held steadily in her hand, she let her thoughts go free, and walked on like a *marionette*.

See p. 309.